UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE

STEP Committee

Technology Fee Application

Mouton Hall Wifi Update

Title

Dr. McKinzie Craig Hall & Allen Latour

Name of Submitter

(Faculty or Staff Only)

Department of Political Science

Organization

Title: Mouton Hall Wifi Updates   Date: 01/15/2020

Name (Contact Person):   McKinzie Hall

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Department/College/Org: Political Science/Liberal Arts

ABSTRACT (250 words or less):

The purpose of this grant is to upgrade the WiFi in Mouton Hall. This will increase the speed and capacity of the WiFi in the building and by upgrading this hardware, it will increase the speed of all hardwired computers and make future upgrades easier and more cost effective. This building houses a number of academic programs, student organizations, classrooms, and offices. Given the recent transition to Office 365, there are increased opportunities for student-to-student and student-to-instructor collaboration through sharing and editing documents and presentations but this collaboration requires students to be able to connect their devices reliably to WiFi. Also, the recent increase of the usage of services like Poll Everywhere, TopHat etc, allows for more student interaction in the classroom but, again, these services require stable WiFi. Currently, the WiFi is slow and has a limited range, with faculty frequently relying on the WiFi from Taco Bell across Johnston. As such, an upgrade in the WiFi for the building would expand the learning opportunities for the students who are in our building.

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STEP Proposal

Mouton Hall WiFi Update

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Purpose of Grant and Impact on Student Body

The purpose of this grant is to upgrade the WiFi in Mouton Hall. The WiFi in the building does not have the capacity to reach all of the areas of the building and support all of the individuals using it. Due to current capacity limitations, it is often faster to use cell phone data, which disadvantages students without unlimited data packages, or free WiFi from nearby businesses.

Mouton Hall is home to the Departments of Political Science, and Sociology, Anthropology, and Child and Family Studies. The building houses 6 classrooms, 3 undergraduate research spaces, and 30 faculty offices. The classrooms are regularly used for classes that are part of the General Education core required of all students on campus (POLS, ANTH, SOCI) and by UNIV 100. In Fall 2019, enrollment in the classrooms in Mouton Hall was over 2,000 seats. Faculty are eager to use more technology in these classes. Faculty could engage students using services like Poll Everywhere, Kahoot, TopHat, Google Classroom etc, but these services require all students to be able to access WiFi regularly and that is often difficult with the current WiFi speed and coverage.

The classrooms in Mouton Hall are also frequently used by student organizations and other offices on campus, giving our students opportunities to enhance their personal and professional networks. For example, in Fall 2019, Mouton Hall housed regular meetings for the Law Society, Political Science Club, Sociology Society, UL GLASS, the International Student Society, Pi Sigma Alpha, and TLC Supplemental Instruction Sessions. These groups would also benefit from WiFi to use apps to engage and interact. Students can use their personal data plans on some devices but this can limit students' ability to participate fully if they do not have sufficient data or do not have a device that enables data usage (ie working from a WiFi only tablet instead of a smart phone).

This upgrade would also increase the speed of the SMART computers in each classroom in Mouton Hall, which are hardwired to the University's network. This will allow for better integration of multi media presentations in the classes and group meetings.

The undergraduate research spaces (ANTH lab, SOCI lab, and POLS moot court room) have allowed students to integrate research into their undergraduate education. They are learning about field research, legal research, statistical methods etc. These labs can become more interactive with better access to WiFi and improved upload and download speeds on the computers that are plugged directly into the University network. Whether it's working on a paper in a faculty member's office or it's a meeting between students in a research lab, collaborative research provides experiential learning opportunities to students that enhance their education. The University's investment in Office 365 allows for better collaboration between students and between students and their instructors. It has become easier to share documents and work together on research papers, data collection, presentations etc. Given this collaboration requires access to OneDrive and the cloud based applications, it is critical that students and faculty have dependable access to WiFi.

The proposed budget of $38,000 will allow for the upgrading of the current Mouton Hall network infrastructure, which is required to support the proposed new Wireless system. The upgrade will support the building's networking needs for years to come, and the new cables that will be run for the proposed new Wireless Access Points will be able to support future generations of Wireless access points as well, making future upgrades much more cost effective.

Projected lifetime of enhancement
The proposed upgrade should yield sufficient WiFi access for at least 5 years. This enhancement also makes future upgrades easier and more cost effective.

Responsible persons
1. Implementation: Dr. McKinzie Craig Hall, Assistant Professor of Political Science, and Allen Latour, Laboratory Technician for the College of Liberal Arts

2. Installation: Department of Information and Media Networks (IMN)

3. Maintenance: Department of Information and Media Networks (IMN)

4. Operation: All students and faculty in the vicinity of Mouton Hall

5. Training (with qualifications): No training required

Previously funded STEP projects:
The Department of Political Science generally and Dr. McKinzie Hall specifically have not received a STEP grant from any cycle going back to at least 2016. Allen Latour has been on numerous STEP grants implemented through the College of Liberal Arts.

Budget Proposal

1. **Equipment**   **$38,000 – Quote provided by UL Department of Information and Media Networks. Includes Equipment, Materials and Labor**

2. Software $

3. Supplies $

4. Maintenance $

5. Personnel $

6. Other $

TOTAL: **$38,000**