

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE

STEP Committee

Technology Fee Application

**WiFi Expansion in Intensive English
Program Building**

Title

Brandt Snook

Name of Submitter
(Faculty or Staff Only)

**Intensive English Program,
Division of Global Engagement**

Organization

Title: WiFi Expansion in IEP Building Date: 9/27/2021
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Department/College/Org: Intensive English Program, Division of Global Engagement

ABSTRACT (250 words or less):

The Intensive English Program (IEP), part of the Division of Global Engagement, is a ‘bridge’ English language program for speakers of other languages. This program was created as a recruitment tool to increase the diversity and enrollment of the student population on campus. It offers English language classes to international students that wish to study at UL Lafayette but have not met our admissions English proficiency requirement. It also provides these classes to individuals from the community who wish to improve their English skills for personal and/or professional enrichment.

In order to better serve these students and to increase our enrollment, we are requesting a grant to improve the wireless internet access and availability in our building. Currently, the IEP has one wireless internet access point (WAP). We propose the purchase of 13 additional WAPs, to be located strategically in the building to provide internet access to student classrooms and communal spaces where students and others gather for classes and university events. A placement plan has been determined by Networking Services. We also request funds for wiring and installation to ensure that the new WAPs are properly connected. Installation will be completed by Ernest P. Breaux Electrical, Inc.

The requested equipment will enable students and staff to have access to and utilize the internet while in the building. It also provides the students and staff a better opportunity to engage with the growing number of students who enroll in our program from outside the US.

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

The Intensive English Program (IEP) is requesting support to expand and upgrade its existing wireless internet access. At present, the IEP has one wireless router on its first floor (in Room #138; see pictures 1 & 2). The location of this router does not allow access to the UL WiFi network in any of the classrooms, which are on the second floor. Additional wireless access points (WAP) would provide both teachers and students educational resources in a quick and timely fashion on a variety of devices. It also would allow students and teachers to easily share lessons, presentations, and documents within the classroom. The placement of new routers would also reach communal places where students gather. A fundamental part of learning a language is engaging with others to use that language. Increased access to the internet would further the engagement of students with their peers and with their teacher in non-classroom settings while in the IEP Building.

Picture 1 - WAP in Room 138



Picture 2 - Close-up of WAP



With the number of students enrolling in the IEP from outside the country increasing, the IEP has explored many new and innovative ways to continue to market itself to this audience while still meeting the needs of students within the country. Improved networking and WiFi is vital to connect these students in a classroom setting and allow them to participate in real time with other students and their teachers. Appealing to, and being able to offer classes to, students outside the country increases enrollment and markets the University to emergent communities.

The IEP currently has 20 students enrolled for the upcoming Spring 1 2022 academic session. All of these students will be taught remotely, with 5 of them being outside the country. The number of students enrolled in the IEP has steadily been improving over the last 4 academic sessions, and we expect this number to continue to rise. Historically, the IEP Building has also hosted a number of international student events and activities, which are open to the 481 international students and the student body at large. While this is not held in a second floor classroom due to the size of participants (sometimes 50+), we anticipate the improved wifi providing ample connection to this space (Room #100; see picture 3). This building also hosts monthly informational sessions for international students, ranging on topics from Optional Practical Training, Curricular Practical Training, Tax filing, and others. These sessions

are attended by around 30 international students on average (held in Room #201; see picture #4). Improved wifi would allow these sessions to be broadcast and attended by even more students on Zoom, Teams, or other virtual meeting services.

Picture 3 - Room 100 (used for International Hour)



Picture 4 - Room 201 (used for informational sessions)



One of the main goals of the IEP is to continue to advance and improve their usage and practice of remote/distance learning, which has been pivotal to maintaining and increasing enrollment of students during the last year and a half. Due to the current lack of wifi on the 2nd floor (where classrooms are), any remote/distance learning can only be done in one of the two SMART classrooms (Rooms 222 & 231; see picture 5) where a laptop can be physically plugged into an ethernet jack (see picture 6). Once wifi expansion takes place, all 13 of the second floor classrooms can be utilized for remote/distance learning (see examples of Rooms 220 & 225; pictures 7 & 8) with the help of mobile projection units the IEP already has.

Picture 5 - Room 231 (SMART Classroom example)



Picture 6 - Ethernet plugs only present Rooms 231 & 222



Picture 7 - Larger Classroom (Room 220)



Picture 8 - Smaller Classroom (Room 225)



The two SMART classrooms are equipped with ceiling mounted projectors from a previous grant (Smart Classrooms: Intensive English Program, 2013), but equipment in these rooms has been deemed no longer sustainable by STEP. The digital projectors are not equipped with wifi/BlueTooth connections (see picture 9). However, laptops can be connected to them with existing wiring to project into the physical classroom and screen share into a virtual meeting service. This type of “hybrid” class system (where both students in-country can be physically present in a classroom and students out-of-country can attend virtually) is an advantageous way to involve all demographics of students.

Picture 9 - Overhead Projector



Wifi could also be utilized for instruction within the existing computer lab, which has also been deemed no longer sustainable by STEP. The IEP has access to two mobile projectors which can be used to display information in this computer lab for instruction. This computer lab currently has 4 desktop computers from a previous STEP Grant (Computer Lab Intensive English Program, 2016). These computers are connected to the internet via physical ethernet cables. They do not require additional network services (see picture 10).

Picture 10 - Computer Lab (Room 233)



The other 11 classrooms do not have any equipment that require additional network services (see pictures 7 & 8).

In order for the IEP to continue to provide the best possible learning environment for its students, its building requires improvements to networking and WiFi. The improvements would increase the quality of life for both students and staff, allowing increased viability in the ever-changing global market of education.

In sum, this grant will impact students in the following ways:

- It will support the University's efforts to increase the diversity and enrollment of international students in our student body;
- It will support the University's efforts to increase retention and graduation rates;
- It will enhance English language instruction with interactive technology for minority students;
- It will foster a learning environment that stimulates intellectual growth.

B. Projected lifetime of Enhancement

The projected lifetime of this enhancement is a minimum of 5 years before needing upgrades or replacement to the WAPs. Any additional or new wiring is expected to last 7-10 years.

C. Persons Responsible

i. Implementation: Brandt Snook

ii. Installation: The Louisiana-based company Ernest P. Breaux Electrical, Inc. will complete the installation, which is included in the budget proposal.

iii. Maintenance: Network Services (as needed), Brandt Snook

iv. Operation: Brandt Snook

v. Training: No training is required.

D. Budget Proposal

1.	Equipment	\$5,779.54	(Quote from Network Services for WAPs, mounting brackets, license bundle, and support)
		\$5,760.00	(Quote from Ernest P. Breaux Electrical, Inc. for installation of WAPs and wiring)
2.	Software	\$0	
3.	Supplies	\$0	
4.	Maintenance	\$0	Routine maintenance covered by the administrative unit
5.	Personnel	\$0	No additional personnel required
6.	Other	\$0	
TOTAL:		\$11,539.54	

5. Other Relevant Information

The IEP has pursued funding from its administrative unit (Academic Affairs); they were unable to provide funding support.

6. Previous Funded STEP Projects

Brandt Snook has never submitted a STEP grant proposal prior to this proposal. However, previous funded STEP projects for the IEP include:

Computer Lab Intensive English Program, Rose Honegger, 2016
Smart Classrooms: Intensive English Program, Rose Honegger, 2013
Intensive English Program Computer Classroom, Rose Honegger, 2006

Instruction Sheet:

1. Complete the cover page.
2. Complete the abstract page.
3. Give a description of your proposal in 12 pt. font, single spaced, addressing the following points:
 - a. Purpose of grant and impact to student body as a whole
 - b. Projected lifetime of enhancement
 - c. Person(s) responsible for
 - i. Implementation
 - ii. Installation
 - iii. Maintenance
 - iv. Operation
 - v. Training (with qualifications)
 - d. The narrative of the proposal must include the purpose and justification for each of the items listed in the Budget Proposal.
4. Complete the Budget Proposal form.
5. Include any additional information relevant to your application.
6. Discuss all previous funded STEP projects (if any).

ONE ELECTRONIC COPY (Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF)
OF PROPOSAL SHOULD BE EMAILED TO
stepproposal@louisiana.edu
BY DEADLINE DATE.

For additional submission instructions and deadlines,
please visit <http://cio.louisiana.edu/step-process>

NO HARD COPY SUBMISSIONS WILL
BE ACCEPTED!