

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: 01-17-2022
Name (Contact Person): Patricio J. Salinas
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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 requirements of fulfilling video production assignments via editing software. The new hardware will meet the current demands of their workflow, primarily regarding video production, graphic design, and multi-media journalism. By having both trained professors/instructors and graduate assistants teaching students in various Communication and Moving Image Arts production classes, 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 increasing reliance on faster computer speeds necessary to run the required editing systems.

Purpose of Grant and Impact to Student Body

As the pandemic restrictions ease and students gradually return to face-to-face classes, many students will need computer access for video editing software to complete their required coursework. Therefore, it is imperative that UL Lafayette invests 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 workstations, which are 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 use to complete video production assignments prescribed by their professors or instructors. Such workstations are accessible to students during the university's hours of operation and after regular hours. As video production becomes a tool more widely used in other disciplines, these computers would benefit the larger student population of those who aspire to create video projects across disciplines not normally offering 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. 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, and primarily assist outside of class time. Graduate assistants may also remotely guide students who are having difficulties with the editing software. In this event, graduate assistants trained in video editing will set-up a viral time and space schedule where editing or graphic design is reinforced as the student emerges competent in computer media editing. As an R1 university, the ULL strives to foster a climate in which resources remain readily accessible to students in their course of learning and innovation.

In terms of faculty, professors/instructors 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. Additionally, 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. 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 gaining traction to the video editing suites, students will 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 acquisition scenarios, purchasing professional editing software at a student discount can cost upwards to \$300 a year. This lifeline of computer acquisition is a beneficial situation for this reason and others.

Operation of Equipment

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

Previously Funded STEP Projects

In fall 2016, the Department of Communication updated Burke-Hawthorne Hall 250 with funding for PC computers and printer replacement. In addition, \$23,500 was awarded for the SPSS Software Renewal and Vision Pro Software Installation.

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. In addition, \$2,235 was awarded for the Phantom 4 Pro Maintenance and involved 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 from the Student Technology Enhancement Program to replace 19 Apple computers. The purpose of the grant was to establish a Media Command Center for the Department of Communication.

Budget Proposal

1. **\$19,899.00 Equipment (Z12R)**
Eleven 24-inch iMac with Retina 4.5K display: Apple M1 chip with 8-core CPU and 8-core 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: None
Logic Pro: None
Keyboard Languages: Magic Keyboard with Touch ID and Numeric Keypad - US English
Accessory Kit: Accessory Kit

\$1,859.00 S7735LL/A
Eleven 4-Year AppleCare+ for Schools – iMac

(\$714.45) HMYE2ZM/A
Eleven Satechi Aluminum USB-C Multiport Pro Adapter
2. **Software** \$
3. **Supplies** \$
4. **Maintenance** \$
5. **Personnel**
6. **Other** \$

TOTAL: **\$ 22,472.45**