UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE

STEP Committee

Technology Fee Application

Computer Upgrades for Music Media and Recording Arts Laboratories in the School of Music

Title

Chris Munson

Name of Submitter
(Faculty or Staff Only)

School of Music/College of Arts

Organization

Title: Computer Upgrades for Music Media and Recording Arts Laboratories in the School of Music   Date: January 5, 2024

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Department/College/Org: School of Music/College of Arts

ABSTRACT (250 words or less):

The School of Music contains four laboratory/studio spaces for the Music Media and Recording Arts programs. At this time, over fifteen courses for the two programs utilize those spaces for lecture and lab experience in music technology and computer-based music. The B.A. in Recording Arts program was recently approved by the University and began accepting students during the fall 2021 semester. Over 50 incoming freshmen and transfer students have enrolled in the program, causing increased demand for all four laboratory/studio spaces. Though new course fees and program fees have been proposed on multiple occasions, there is no current solution to offset the budgetary needs to maintain and upgrade our equipment and software. We currently have urgent equipment needs that exceed our budget.

The four laboratory/studio spaces for the Music Media and Recording Arts programs were established in the School of Music over the past two decades by funding from either Board of Regents grants or private donors. These spaces allow faculty to blend lectures, demonstrations, guided listening, and the assignment of independent projects for students in Music Media, Recording Arts, Music Business, Theater, and Music Education. They are located in the following rooms:

- Angelle Hall room 125 – Music Technology Lab
- Angelle Hall room 158 – Recording Studio
- Angelle Hall room 222 – Post-production Studio
- Angelle Hall room 226 – Film Scoring Lab/Advanced Music Technology

This Step Grant request is for the replacement of four (4) iMac Pro computers. The computers are located in ANG 158, 222, and 226, with an additional instructor's terminal for content creation, file backup, troubleshooting, and emergency replacement in the event that any of the laboratory computers fails (which has occurred repeatedly in the past decade).

A previous Step Grant was awarded to replace 17 computers and MIDI keyboards, as well as software, in the Music Technology Lab (ANG 125) to prepare for an influx of students enrolling in the newly created Recording Arts program. The increase in enrollment has exceeded expectations and projections, and is currently creating added demand and usage of the computers in ANG 158, 222, and 226. These computers are beginning to show signs of wear and degradation which will only be accelerated in the coming semester. Because these computers are central to the learning environment for the courses taught in these programs, it is essential to replace them before they fail. If any one of these computers were to cease working during the semester, several courses would be nearly impossible to teach, creating a negative impact on both faculty and students.

The following courses are taught in ANG 158, 222, and/or 226 and utilize the computers for both lecture and student projects:

- MUS 243 – Pro Tool I
- MUS 244 – Pro Tools II
- MUS 313 – Live Event Production
- MUS 376 – Audio Rec Tech I
- MUS 377 – Audio Rec Tech II
- MUS 422 – Live Sound and Post-production
- MUS 432 – Advanced Electronic Music
- MUS 433 – DIY Recording
- MUS 434 – Mastering
- MUS 435 – Critical Listening
- MUS 439 – Film Scoring
- MUS 441 – Advanced Topics in Music Media
- MUS 466 – Capstone Project

Each semester approximately 75-100 students, along with faculty, actively use the computers in these spaces in conjunction with the above-listed courses. The storage, processing, and usage demands placed on these computers are significant, and it is imperative that they are 100% functional. The instructor's station computer in ANG 125 began showing signs of failure during the fall 2023 semester, causing one faculty member to lose all their files and instructional materials in the middle of the semester.

Macintosh computers are the industry standard for both audio and visual arts, and the computers selected for these three spaces are the most cost-effective versions that are capable of handling the storage, processing, and usage needs of faculty and students. The computers are capable of being configured in a way that will allow for the optimal usage of multiple audio recording and music synthesis programs, as well as interfacing with external audio production hardware. The iMac Pro computers that are currently in these spaces can be repurposed for faculty usage or stored for emergency usage in case of a catastrophic computer crash.

It is projected that these new computers will have a lifespan of 4-5 years based on the current usage of the computers in ANG 158, 222, and 226. Approximately 75-100 students per semester will be positively impacted by these upgrades. This number is expected to increase with the continued growth of the Recording Arts program.

Person(s) responsible for implementation- Chris Munson Installation- Chris Munson and IT Staff
Maintenance- Chris Munson and IT Staff
Operation- Chris Munson

Training (with qualifications)- Chris Munson, Music Media and Recording Arts Coordinator, Supervisor of Music Technology and Education Lab.

I have had three previous STEP projects funded. Two of these projects were for the music technology lab in ANG 125 and allowed us to purchase and install the computers, keyboards, and software. The other project funded the purchase of the iMac Pro computers currently in use in ANG 158, 222, and 226.

Budget Proposal

1. **Equipment**   **$55,980**

QTY	EQUIPMENT	PRICE	TOTAL PRICE
4	**Mac Pro Computers**	**$6,999**	**$27,996**
4	**Pro XDR Display Standard Glass**	**$4,999**	**$19,996**
4	**Pro Display Stand**	**$ 999**	**$ 3,996**
4	**Apple+ Care**	**$ 499**	**$ 1,996**
4	**Apple+ Care for Pro Display**	**$ 499**	**$ 1,996**

TOTAL: **$55,980**