

**2001 - 2002
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
VISION PLAN**

For

**The School of Social Work
The University of Texas at Austin**

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Executive Summary

Social work is a multi-faceted cross discipline profession. Our students need both specialized knowledge and a broad perspective on all issues affecting the human condition. The study of social work requires enormous complex information about people, society, and service. With information technology we can improve the educational experience for both students and faculty by providing better access to content. There are vast information resources available to us. We need the technology and support to incorporate them into curricula and deliver them to students. Our vision is to provide the information and technology necessary for faculty and students by providing the resources for information access and presentation technologies. We seek a learning experience that emphasizes mastery of content and analytical ability. We can provide complete information support to faculty and students, while making it easy for them to access and use, by providing appropriate resources for development and delivery. This requires equipment resources, information resources, and personnel resources.

The School has a strong vision of what it could do given the resources. It understands the potential and utility of information technology in the classroom and the profession. However, small schools face formidable challenges in attaining and maintaining technology resources and support staff necessary to operate at a level consistent with other departments. We can easily exhaust our annual allocation simply providing equipment, software, and maintenance for a network, a computer lab, and an IT classroom. At current funding, we proceed incrementally with little left for contingency or life cycle budgeting. The School of Social Work greatly appreciates every effort by The University to improve the disparity of resources between schools. Each implementation has a dramatic effect on our ability to improve and provide technological resources. The FCI, CLC, Microsoft agreement and departmental volume pricing have made significant contributions to offset our operating expenses. In recent years special project and multimedia allocations we received from The University allowed us to install and expand IT resources into the classroom.

We are committed to our students and will continue to utilize our ITAC funds to provide them with the best possible technology and support for education and training. However, we need financial support that goes beyond our current allocation, to upgrade our facility, and provide us with renewable funding for support staff and equipment for ITAC eligible projects, as well as, faculty, staff, administration, and research. Our proposal is to improve our ability to produce and deliver information resources in our classrooms. We have 4 proposals eligible for ITAC funding and 1 non-eligible. They are listed in the table below.

Proposal (ITAC Eligible)	Cost
Classroom Presentation and Instructional Technology IT equipment in 6 classrooms and Utopia Theater	\$114,700
IT Classroom and LRC Life Cycle Funding Life cycle equipment and support	\$53,300
Faculty Release for Curricula Development Funding for faculty release time to develop IT resources for integrated curricula support	\$35,000
Video Production Video taping, editing and production equipment	\$26,900

	Total ITAC	\$229,900
Proposal (Non-ITAC Eligible)		
Faculty and Administrative Life Cycle Funding		\$37,500
Life cycle equipment upgrade		
	Total Non-ITAC	\$37,500
	Total Proposal	\$267,400

School of Social Work Vision

Social work is a profession that touches all aspects of the human condition. Our students are trained to work in a variety of settings, needing both a high degree of specialized knowledge and the ability to see the big picture. For example, a case worker in the mental health field may need to incorporate physician, psychologist, and pharmaceutical instructions; family and external support assessments; available community services; federal, state, and local assistance criteria; cultural issues; and a thorough understanding of client needs, wishes, and rights into a coherent work plan. Social workers are called upon to make potential life and death decisions in child and elder abuse, welfare eligibility, drug and alcohol treatment, domestic violence, sexual assault, parole, gang prevention, victims services etc. Still others take knowledge of direct services and apply it to advocacy, community organization, program evaluation, policy analysis, politics, and management. Thus, the study of social work requires enormous complex information resources about people, society, and service.

The goal of the information technology vision plan in the School of Social Work is to provide complete information support for all of the School's instructional programs. We wish to improve the educational experience for both students and faculty by taking advantage of the opportunities and resources made possible by the ongoing development of information technologies. In the past technology posed a pitfall for a discipline like ours. It was easy to get trapped by the steep learning curve and expenditure of time just in learning the technology and miss the vast resources and information it provides. For example, one issue we struggle with is do we train students to search the Internet for information, a course by itself, or do we provide them with the information and focus on developing their critical thinking and analytical skills? We choose to incorporate technology and its by-products into our classes and not to restructure our classes around emerging technologies. In a model, not dissimilar to that of assigned readings, we seek a learning experience that emphasizes mastery of content over mastery of technology. Fortunately, this model fits both an increasingly technology savvy student and the current trend of cross platform and integrated software that smoothes the transition from thought to outline to final document to presentation and distribution. Integrated software makes it possible for our faculty and students to become individually proficient in information technologies without necessarily a comprehensive understanding of the technology.

Our school is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Much of the past 50 years was spent in shifting from place to place in search of a building. Now that we have an excellent facility with classrooms, office space, and connections to the UT backbone, we have turned our vision inward toward developing a state of the art facility that provides the information and technology needs of faculty and students. In just a few years we have evolved from trying to keep up with technology to trying to have our technology keep up with us. We seek to provide complete information support to faculty and students by providing the appropriate resources for development and delivery. This requires equipment resources, information resources, and personnel resources. We will achieve our goal, if we can provide the following:

- Equipment Resources for the development and delivery of information technology;

- Information Resources that are clearly identified or specifically designed to support curricula, enhance student understanding, enhance teaching effectiveness, and promote professional growth, research, and community service;
- Personnel Resources for technical expertise, support, and maintenance.

We have made great strides toward actualizing this vision. We upgraded our network to a switch architecture with complete 10baseT connection throughout the building and filled our IT classroom and LRC computer lab to capacity, our multimedia lab and video recording studio are functioning, four classrooms have video presentation capability and all faculty and staff are using at least first generation PPC/Pentium desktop machines. The School has a number of Internet servers employing database technology hosting a variety of internal and external services from on-line testing and application forms to a searchable community-wide database of human service volunteer and employment opportunities.

Facilities and Staffing

School-Wide Network

Our network switch architecture is 3 years old. We continue to provide a router slot for Central Duplicating and port for the University Child Care Center, both located in our building. At this time, all of the computers used by students, faculty, and staff are connected to the University's network through Ethernet connections. All faculty and staff are using at least PPC/Pentium workstations. The School has several dedicated servers. Internally they provide cross-platform file sharing, networked printer access, run LabMan software to manage the LRC Computer Lab, manage the IT classroom, and provide utility, diagnostic and installation software. Externally they provide Internet services, especially database applications ranging from on-line testing and application forms to a searchable university-wide database of TA/RA job applicants and a community-wide database of human service volunteer and employment opportunities.

LRC Computer Laboratory

The laboratory is managed as an open facility, not limited to social work students. The lab is used by students, TA's, AI's, RA's, and faculty with low end personal workstations. The computer lab is filled to capacity with 24 workstations, 12 PPC 7300/200 Macintosh (surplus from SMF upgrade) and 12 Pentium I and Pentium II Dell machines.

Instructional Technology Classrooms

The IT classroom has a total of 30 Pentium II Dell workstations, an instructor station, VCR, and an LCD video projection system. Four additional classrooms are equipped with a VCR and LCD video projection.

Multimedia Production Facility

The LRC has a video production studio with tape editing equipment and a PPC 8600 AV computer workstation with photo, graphics, and authoring software, a color scanner, digital camera, slide scanner, and CD burner.

Staff Support

The School has two full time technical support staff.

A senior systems analyst, who is responsible for network administration, Web resources, training, data analysis, technical support for faculty and staff, and supervision.

A systems analyst, who is responsible for the IT classroom, the LRC computer lab, student support, and faculty IT projects related to curriculum development.

Proposed Projects (ITAC Eligible)

Project Title: Classroom Presentation and Instructional Technology

Faculty and students have consistently asked for improved video projection and computer presentation capabilities in classrooms. For years we have pushed faculty and students to develop and integrate information technology into their course work without being able to provide a platform for them to adequately present it. There is a real need to be able to incorporate instructional technology resources including computer and Web based multimedia instructional materials, CD-ROM and traditional media such as videotape into classroom instruction. Students in almost every class can benefit from presentation materials. Excerpts of movies, TV programs, special PBS programs, etc. can easily give students graphic illustrations of the concepts faculty are trying to teach in class. Furthermore, students of this generation tend to be more visual and less fond of the traditional teaching methods. Currently, faculty fight over scheduling existing VCR/monitors mounted on wheeled carts. We only have one mobile LCD projector for shared use and one mounted permanently in the IT classroom.

We would like to complete work in our six large classrooms. We need to equip the remaining two classrooms with a secure wall mounted rack housing VCR, receiver, and distribution amplifier, with speakers and ceiling mounted LCD projector. The school would like to purchase 12 computers for permanent installation as instructor stations in our classrooms. We have chosen permanent installation over laptops or mobile huts because it is easier to maintain a consistent interface, more secure, and faculty preferred. We would like to purchase 2 mobile projection systems to share among our smaller classrooms and for external use as needed. With these additions, we will have full audio/video/multimedia capability in all our classrooms.

In addition to our traditional classrooms, we would like to equip the Utopia Theater with state of art presentation and instructional technology. It is a wonderful presentation and teaching facility in the School, however it is not installed with any audio/video technology short of a microphone equipped lectern. Currently there are six social work classes meeting there and it is regularly scheduled by other departments. The School could use it for various video and downlink conferences we now schedule and pay for at other facilities. The Utopia Theater has been approved for remodeling by The University, so an equipment installation at this time is advantageous.

This proposal is for \$30,000 to install secure presentation equipment in 2 classrooms, \$42,000 for 12 workstations, \$35,500 to equip the Utopia Theater, and \$7,200 for 2 mobile projection systems. This is a one time equipment expenditure of \$114,700. Expenditures are outlined in the table below.

Year One	Cost
(2) Classroom presentation equipment @\$15,000	\$30,000
(12) Workstations/software/security @\$3,500	\$42,000
(2) Mobile projection systems @ \$3,600	\$7,200
Utopia Theater	\$35,500
Total Cost	\$114,700

Project Title: IT Classrooms and LRC Life Cycle Funding

This proposal is for funding to maintain our IT classroom and LRC computer lab so that faculty and students can teach and learn in a first class environment. The school has made significant contributions to both the IT Classroom and LRC computer lab. The school provided students with a computer lab facility before most faculty had desktop computers. Using a combination of ITAC funds, student IT and LRC fees, and surplus from the SMF upgrade the school has put all its student generated technology funds into equipment and support for these facilities.

The laboratory is managed as an open facility used by students, TA's, AI's, RA's, and even faculty with low end personal workstations. It is open 7 days a week. The lab is filled to capacity with 24 workstations, 12 Mac and 12 PC. The lab is informal and students can work in groups, which is a substantial component of social work curricula, but generally disallowed in other facilities on campus. The school's IT classroom has a total of 30 Pentium II Dell workstations and an instructor station. The room was equipped with furniture with recessed monitors for maximum instruction effectiveness, visibility, and desktop space. It is our primary teaching and presentation facility and is currently engaged full time by 6 courses and scheduled by others when necessary. Our original plan was to have this as an open facility that could be scheduled by other Colleges. This is particularly attractive with the expansive after hours parking available. However, we realize that without full-time support staff for scheduling, security, and maintenance, we currently cannot open this facility to other departments.

We are requesting funds for life cycle maintenance, support, and upgrade of equipment in the IT classroom and lab. In the lab some of the workstations are dated making integration with other workstations and group collaboration on projects difficult. (They will be used to supply other areas of the school where students have requested workstations such as student services and the Office of Career Development.) Support costs (i.e., software, network charges, insurance, and maintenance) are annual fees that eat a large chunk of our small ITAC budget that could be put to more innovative uses. We do not have a personnel position funded solely to provide support for the lab and IT classroom limiting their usefulness to us and The University.

We are requesting \$20,000 for the immediate replacement of 8 first generation Pentium workstations, \$6,000 for support (i.e., software, network charges, insurance, and maintenance), and \$27,300 for one full time support staff position. The total cost of the proposal for Year One is \$53,300. We are requesting life cycle funding of \$45,000 starting in Year Two and recurring annually to replace 1/3 of our lab and classroom workstations. Support and personnel are also recurring annual costs. Projected over three years at present staffing and salaries the total cost would be \$209,900.

Year One	Cost
Total Equipment	\$20,000
Support (i.e., software, network charges, insurance, and maintenance)	\$6,000
Computer User Services Specialist	\$27,300
Total Cost	<u>\$53,300</u>

Recurring Annual Costs (Year Two and Three)

Total Equipment (1/3 replacement)	\$45,000
Support (i.e., software, network charges, insurance, and maintenance)	\$6,000
Computer User Services Specialist	<u>\$27,300</u>
	Total Annual Cost <u>\$78,300</u>
Projected Total 3 yr. Expenditure	\$209,900

Project Title: Faculty Release for Curricula Development

The social work curriculum has a number of integrated classes. Many of the required courses in the MSSW degree program are sequential or run concurrent within a semester. In the BSW degree program there are large generalist classes that are broken into several sections. Both degree programs would benefit from a coordinated effort to integrate related classes and develop Web based instructional materials. The School recognizes that even with Blackboard and ACITS support, that the time and expertise involved in developing curricula materials is often beyond the scope of our faculty. Most faculty are already involved in research, community, and practice endeavors outside of their normal teaching load.

This proposal is a one time expenditure for release time for one senior faculty position per semester. This person will be in charge of coordinating efforts of other faculty in the design and development of Web based curricula for integrated delivery of social work courses. They will be directly responsible for coordination, design, development, and implementation of a Web based curricula using Blackboard. It is our belief that a senior level faculty is in the best position to bring together other faculty and oversee the development of integrated curricula. In the process they will reach a certain level of expertise in Blackboard and Web related tools, that they may not have been able to achieve on their own time. The benefits of this proposal to our students, faculty, and our School are great. Not only does it give us an opportunity to integrate related course materials and upgrade the way we deliver content, it provides training for senior faculty, who can then act as trainers and mentors to their colleagues.

We are requesting \$35,000 for the release of one senior level faculty per semester in the first year. After the first year, depending on need, the School will seek additional sources of funding to continue the support of faculty training and curricula development. The School hopes that The University will recognize both the time and expertise constrains on faculty with an active teaching load and the need for university-wide incentives for faculty to develop and implement a completely new course delivery structure.

Year One	Cost
(1) Faculty Release (1st Semester)	\$17,500
(2) Faculty Release (2nd Semester)	\$17,500
Total Cost	<u>\$35,000</u>

Project Title: Video Production

Field faculty, who teach practice courses with a heavy emphasis on experiential learning and modeling of technique, are currently working on video projects to provide consistency for content commonly repeated in a number of course sections. A major obstacle has been not having internal resources both equipment and staff support for taping and editing. The same type of equipment and staff support could help all of the faculty make fuller use of special speakers. For instance, the School often has practitioners from the community come and tell students how they work with special populations, or how they approach a certain problem with their clients. Each speaker's content could potentially be taped, edited, and made available for presentation to other classes or for self-paced instruction.

This proposal is a one time expenditure for digital equipment for taping presentations, demonstrations and curriculum content enrichment projects, digital production equipment for producing finished video and multimedia products, and personnel costs for one half-time graduate assistant level support staff (for example RTF student). We are requesting \$4,000 for video recording equipment, \$10,500 for digital editing equipment and software, and \$12,400 for one half time RTF graduate assistant. The total cost of the project is \$26,900. Support staff is a recurring annual cost. Projected over three years at present staffing and salaries the total cost would be \$51,700.

Year One	Cost
Video taping equipment	\$4,000
Digital editing equipment and software	\$10,500
(1) half-time graduate assistant position	\$12,400
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Total Cost	\$26,900

Recurring Annual Costs	
(1) half-time graduate assistant position	\$12,400
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Projected Total 3 yr. Expenditure	\$51,700

Proposed Projects (Non-ITAC Eligible)

Project Title: Faculty and Administrative Life Cycle Funding

This proposal is an effort to receive funds from internal University sources for a life cycle funding strategy to replace and upgrade out of date resources. These are workstations used by full time faculty, full time staff, and as file and Internet servers performing administrative, teaching, and community service functions. The goal of the information technology vision plan in the School of Social Work is to provide complete information support for all of the School's instructional programs. This rests heavily on the capability of using cross platform and integrated technology that is current.

Based on a modest life cycle projection of four years, we are requesting \$37,500 annually to replace 1/4 of existing faculty and staff workstations. Projected over three years the total cost would be \$112,500.

Year One	Cost
Total Equipment	<u>\$37,500</u>
	Total Cost <u><u>\$37,500</u></u>
Recurring Annual Costs	
Total Equipment	<u>\$37,500</u>
Projected Total 3 yr. Expenditure	<u>\$112,500</u>

IT Funding Overview and Life Cycle Methodology

Small schools like ours face formidable challenges in attaining and maintaining information technology resources and support staff necessary to operate at a level consistent with other departments. We can easily exhaust our annual allocation simply providing equipment, software, and maintenance for a network, a computer lab, and an IT classroom. There are few resources for staff support and none left for new project startup and innovation. We are committed to our students and will continue to utilize our ITAC funds to provide them with the best possible instructional technology for education and training. However, we need some mechanism to provide renewable funding for support staff and equipment for ITAC eligible projects, as well as, faculty, staff, administration, and research.

The School of Social Work greatly appreciates every effort by The University to improve the disparity of resources between schools. Each implementation has a dramatic effect on our ability to improve and provide technological resources. The FCI, BBP, and Microsoft agreement have made significant contributions to offset our operating expenses. The special project and multimedia allocation we received from The University allowed us to open our first IT classroom.

Funding Sources

Our annual ITAC allocation is used primarily to maintain our computer lab and partially pay for one professional staff position to oversee the network and overall technology operations. Without additional funding, we cannot plan for contingency, life cycle renewal, complete infrastructure projects, nor put anything toward development and innovation. This severely impedes our ability to compete with other schools of social work and produce the graduates, research, and products that represent us as a flagship institution.

Our infrastructure for information technology has great potential. Our facility is newly renovated, all of our classrooms and offices have Ethernet connections, and we have a wonderful presentation and teaching facility in the School, the Utopia Theater. Unfortunately the full potential is yet unrealized. While our IT classroom and four additional classrooms have audio/video presentation capability, others have not capability and the Utopia Theater is not installed with any audio/video technology short of a microphone equipped lectern.

In addition to ITAC we use our M&O budget, when available, to purchase new equipment for faculty and administrative staff. Students contribute greatly to the School. They are assessed 5 fees, some of which pay for technical staff and, in special cases, equipment. Recognizing the need for support staff, students recently voted to implement an IT fee and raise the LRC fee to provide support in the computer lab and IT classroom. The FCI is our only source of new computers for new faculty and unfortunately these purchases do not provide trickle down resources for the rest of the School.

The Center for Social Work Research had been our best source of renewable technology resources for faculty and staff. Even though, many of our funding sources are state and local and projects tend to be short term with small budgets this has been a source of new equipment for faculty with research projects. In the past, through trickle down, it was also the best source of getting equipment for the School. However, with the expansion of the Center all equipment is needed for research projects and

the School has had to provide additional support for Center staff, as well. The School's current research projects are focused on acquiring large federal grants to advance our research mission. One proposal has been submitted to create on our campus one of the proposed national social work centers for the study of substance abuse, sponsored by the National Institute of Drug Abuse. Several faculty members are also preparing ROI applications for research studies. All such efforts are serving to expand the School's research infrastructure.

Staffing

The School recognizes it is at a significant disadvantage by not being able to provide annual funding for adequate staff support. The School has two full-time professional technical staff. One is funded mostly from ITAC and the other is paid from the student IT fee. Both have a high level of technical expertise, professional degrees in social work, and many years experience in database, Web, and IT development. With additional support, their skills could be better utilized by the School. Currently their time is spent on day-to-day operations providing: maintenance and support for the network, computer lab, IT classroom, and faculty and staff resources; basic student support in the lab; and special projects such as Y2K, the vision plan, and new computer installations. With additional staff to provide basic day-to-day operations support for the IT classroom and computer lab, our professional staff would be free to provide technical expertise and vision to assist and guide students and faculty in the pursuit of innovative ideas in education, research, and curriculum development.

Appendix I:

Information Technology Funds Annual Summary Report

Recognizing that information technology is a wonderful tool for social workers, the School of Social Work is committed to providing excellent technological resources to our students and faculty. This year we have enhanced our capability for instructional technology in the School by upgrading our IT classrooms, and continuing to maintain and improve resources in our existing computer laboratory and multimedia center.

We received a annual allocation of \$75,500 for 1990-00 and had nothing to carry over from the previous year. We spent the entire ITAC allocation in 1990-00. Our ITAC funds are supplemented by student fees. Actual expenditures are listed below.

Summary Expenditures Report for 1999-2000

Category	Expenditure	Funding Source
Staff		
Sr. Systems Analyst	\$ 28,493	ITAC
	14,246	IT Fee
Systems Analyst (2)	88,093	IT Fee
GRA/URA/Work-Study	19,116	LRC Fee
 Equipment		
IT classrooms and LRC Computer Lab	\$ 38,634	ITAC
	12,787	IT Fee
	11,619	LRC Fee
 Facilities (non-capital equipment)		
IT classrooms and LRC Computer Lab	\$ 6,842	ITAC
	528	IT Fee
	4,445	LRC Fee
 Network (Equipment)		
	\$ -0-	
 Other		
Software	\$ 2,589	ITAC
	70	IT Fee
Support/Maintenance	\$ 9,165	ITAC
	5,705	IT Fee

Progress made in the last year toward our information technology goals includes:

- **Classroom Presentation and Instructional Technology**
4 classrooms equipped with VCR and LCD projection system

- **IT Classroom and LRC Maintenance and Upgrade**
Upgraded 14 workstations in LRC lab with surplus from SMF upgrade
- **Video Production**
Purchase and installation of video taping and editing equipment
- **Faculty and Administrative Technology Upgrade**
With surplus from SMF upgrade and purchase of computers for administrative staff we are able to provide all faculty, field faculty, staff, and TA's with at least first generation PPC/Pentium workstations.

Appendix II

Infrastructure Summary 1999-2000

School-Wide Network

Our network switch architecture is 3 year old. We continue to provide a router slot for Central Duplicating and port for the University Child Care Center, both located in our building. At this time, all of the computers used by students, faculty, and staff are connected to the University's network through Ethernet connections. All faculty and staff are using at least PPC/Pentium workstations. The School has several dedicated servers. Internally they provide cross-platform file sharing, networked printer access, run LabMan software to manage the LRC Computer Lab, manage the IT classroom, and provide utility, diagnostic and installation software. Externally they provide Internet services, especially database applications ranging from on-line testing and application forms to a searchable university-wide database of TA/RA job applicants and a community-wide database of human service volunteer and employment opportunities.

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