

**2002 - 2003
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
VISION PLAN**

For

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

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January 25, 2002

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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.

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. At current funding, we proceed incrementally into the future, spending more time juggling funds then seeking innovations. 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. The FCI, CLC, Microsoft agreement and departmental volume pricing have made significant contributions to offset our operating expenses.

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, upgrade our network capacity, and provide life cycle replacement and support for classroom and lab equipment. We have 4 proposals eligible for ITAC funding and one non-eligible.

Proposal (ITAC Eligible)	Cost
IT Classrooms and Auditorium IT equipment in 3 classrooms and Utopia Theater	\$180,000
IT Classroom and LRC Life Cycle Funding Life cycle equipment and support	\$91,000
Faculty Curricula Development Funding for faculty release time to develop IT resources for integrated curricula support	\$35,000
Network Infrastructure Upgrade to 100 Mbps network connections	\$15,000
Total ITAC	\$321,000
Proposal (Non-ITAC Eligible)	
Administrative Support Life Cycle Funding Life cycle equipment upgrade for staff and non-tenure faculty	\$25,000

	Total Non-ITAC	\$25,000
	Total Proposal	\$346,000

ITAC Expenditures and Support Funds

Our annual ITAC allocation is our primary source of IT funds. It is used primarily to maintain our computer lab, IT classrooms, and partially pay for professional staff to oversee the network and overall technology operations. We used our entire allocation and carry over from the previous year to improve our IT infrastructure and resources in our instructional facilities. We allocated funds to outfit 3 instructional technology classrooms with the current UT classroom configuration. Implementation is planned for this summer. We replaced 1/3 of the computers in our IT classroom and LRC computer lab as part of our life-cycle plan. We purchased four laptops as a shared resource for conferences, workshops, and classroom presentations. We enhanced our video production capability with the addition of a digital video camera, Mac G4 workstation, and video production software.

Students pay an IT fee and an LRC fee. The IT fee was used for permanent support staff positions and GRA's. A small portion of the LRC fee also went for GRA's. These positions provide support for curricula development, student projects, IT classrooms, LRC computer lab, Web resources, and network administration. Other support funds for staff came from School accounts. The School also funded two semesters for an AI to assist faculty getting their courses on blackboard.

In previous years about 50% of our ITAC allocation went to support staff. Staff support and life-cycle replacement continue to exhaust our ITAC allocation. With proposed changes to the Microsoft Agreement, we anticipate our annual recurring costs to rise significantly. We have no surplus funds for such things as facility upgrades or innovations. This year the School cut from its operating budget to make the difference in salaries so that we could go ahead with construction of three IT classrooms. We need some mechanism to provide renewable funding for support staff and life-cycle equipment, as well as, the means to upgrade our facility and support curricula development and innovation.

School of Social Work Vision Plan

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. We seek to provide complete information support to faculty and students by providing the appropriate resources for development and delivery.

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.

Proposed Projects (ITAC Eligible)

IT Classrooms and Auditorium

\$180,000

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. Our plan is to upgrade three additional classrooms and our auditorium, the Utopia Theater, with IT presentation equipment.

IT Classrooms and LRC Life Cycle Funding

\$ 91,000

This proposal is for funding to maintain our IT classrooms and LRC computer lab so that faculty and students can teach and learn in a first class environment. We are requesting funds for life cycle maintenance, support, and upgrade.

Faculty Curricula Development

\$ 35,000

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. Therefore we are requesting funding for faculty release time to develop IT resources for integrated curricula support

Network Infrastructure

\$ 15,000

Our network switches are outdated and available ports are at capacity. With the classroom upgrades we need to upgrade our network to handle the increased capacity and traffic. We are requesting funds for immediate additions and to implement, in consultation with ITS, a life-cycle replacement plan for our network infrastructure. Our goal is to provide 10/100 Mbps service throughout the School.

Proposed Projects (Non-ITAC Eligible)

Administrative Support Life Cycle Funding

\$ 25,000

We need an allocation to implement a life-cycle funding strategy based on 1/4 replacement for administrative staff and non-tenure track faculty similar to that provided by the CLC, as well as, provide for new positions.

Appendix I:

Building Network Status

Our network switch architecture is 5 years old. It consists of ten 10 Mbps switches. We need an additional 48 ports to match current needs and expansion. Many offices have temporary 4-10 port hubs to handle the overload. Eventually we would like to upgrade to 10/100 Mbps for all ports. 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, thanks to the windfall of recycled PC's and Macs from SMF. 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.

Computer Lab Status

The LRC computer laboratory is managed as an open facility, not limited to social work students. The lab is used by students, TA's, AI's, GRA'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 III Dell machines. The LRC also has a video production studio with tape editing equipment and a G4 computer workstation with photo, graphics, and authoring software, a color scanner, digital camera, slide scanner, and CD burner.

Classroom Technology Status

The IT classroom has 30 Pentium III Dell workstations, an instructor station, VCR, and an LCD video projection system. Six other classrooms have a VCR, ceiling mount LCD projector, and a Mac 7300/200. These facilities are heavily used and sorely inadequate. The School has allocated funds to upgrade three classrooms to the UT classroom configuration scheduled for this summer. The School also has a large capacity auditorium that is used for classes, presentations, conferences, and theater productions. The Utopia Theater is used by many other departments on campus in addition to the School of Social Work. It does not have any presentation technology.

Curriculum Innovation Status

We have four faculty that have been using WebCT and blackboard for a number of years. This year with the help of the School funded AI position, several more faculty have moved their courses onto blackboard. The School is making a big push to get all courses on the Web and develop content that can be delivered as distance education. The School recognizes that Internet delivery is the future of education and necessary for us to compete as a world class institution.

Staffing Status

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. They

are funded from ITAC, IT fee, and School funds depending on budget and allocation. Together with a handful of GRA, AI, and workstudy positions, they are responsible for all network administration, Web resources, training, data analysis, technical support , the IT classroom, the LRC computer lab, student support, and faculty IT projects related to curriculum development.