

College of Fine Arts Vision Plan – FY 2005-2006

Introduction

Since the first Vision Plan for Information Technology was completed in 1991, the College of Fine Arts has systematically implemented student microcomputer facilities, technology classrooms, a College-wide network, and other technology infrastructure needed to serve the instructional mission of the college. This year, the process continued with the deployment of specific equipment and software intended to address five areas: upgrades to the existing network infrastructure, additional wireless coverage intended to encourage mobile computing, technology classroom additions and upgrades, and improvements to existing computer laboratories and the sound recording studio.

Two main points -

The balance has shifted from one of construction to one of maintenance

While we continue to implement new technologies in the service of academic instruction, it is important to note that the balance has shifted from one of construction to one of maintenance. The projects implemented over the last 13 years have resulted in a large installed infrastructure that requires increasing amounts of maintenance and refreshment. This year, for example, we are replacing the main network router and switches – a need that recurs at three to five-year intervals. Similarly, nine of our technology classrooms require upgrades of projectors, video processing and/or user interface equipment. The need for recurrent maintenance funding, already substantial, will only increase as we add technology infrastructure.

Important cooperative efforts

The other important trend is the increasingly collaborative nature of IT projects. This year, we will participate in joint projects with the College of Liberal Arts, the College of Communications and General Libraries. Proposals to advance these projects are included under separate cover.

- The “Digital Archive Service”, a joint project between Liberal Arts and Fine Arts received funding for FY 2004-05 and will be in use by the spring of 2005. We intend to expand the project to include more collections and move the source digital assets to General Libraries’ servers.
- The “Inventing Classroom 2010” project, a joint effort of Liberal Arts, Engineering and Fine Arts, will make improvements in the functionality (needed in part to take advantage of the Digital Archive Service) and user interface.
- The “Automatic Media Capture” project, a joint effort between Fine Arts and Communications with participation from Nursing and Social Work, will automate the process of capturing audio and video in the classroom environment and make that media available on a web-accessible server. The successful completion of this pilot project will make it possible to greatly simplify media capture for instructional activities where student review of their classroom work is essential and eliminate the use of camcorders with their attendant limitations.

Summary of Requests

The College of Fine Arts requests \$258,300 for a variety of projects this year. A summary of the projects is provided in the table below:

Technology Classroom Upgrades	Fine Arts	\$60,000
FAML Computer Upgrades	Fine Arts	\$30,000
Summer Faculty Technology “Boot Camp”	Fine Arts	\$10,800
Instructional Technology Support	Fine Arts	\$12,000
Transmedia Studio Technology Hub	Art and Art History	\$56,500
Three New Technology Classrooms	School of Music	\$40,500
Piano Classroom Projectors	School of Music	\$6,000
Film Scoring Lab Acoustic Wall Treatment	School of Music	\$11,500
Tascam/Gigasampler Project	School of Music	\$10,000
Flatbed Press site workstations	Theatre and Dance	\$21,000

Overview of Current IT Programs and Infrastructure

The College of Fine Arts, one of 16 colleges and schools at The University of Texas at Austin, consists of three academic units – the Department of Art and Art History, the School of Music and the Department of Theatre and Dance – and two non-academic units – the Blanton Museum of Art and the Performing Arts Center. With nearly 2000 students, 170 faculty and 175 classified and professional staff, it qualifies as one of the small to mid-size colleges on campus.

The College of Fine Arts at a glance

Departments

Department of Art and Art History
 School of Music
 Department of Theatre and Dance
 Jack S. Blanton Museum
 Performing Arts Center

Personnel

1869 students (fall, 2004)
 170 Tenure-track Faculty

175 Classified and Professional Staff

IT Division Services

Help Desk
Networks and Servers
Technology Classrooms
Computer Labs (FAML TADL)
Recording Studio
A/V Support (T&D)
Fine Arts Web

IT Staffing

College – 14 FTE, 19 part-time (includes T&D)
Art – 2 FTE, 16 part-time
Music – 1 FTE, 7 part-time

IT Mission

Originally formed in 1995 to address the growing technology needs of the College, the Information Technology division and departmental IT units now include 17 full-time and over 40 part time employees managing computer labs, networks and servers, as well as providing computer consulting, multimedia classroom support, and sound recording services for the faculty, students and staff of Fine Arts.

Programs

Recurrent ITAC funding is used primarily to support the routine operation of the major student computer laboratories in the three academic units. The College reserves a small portion (about 28%) to support the central student computer laboratory and network, and distributes the remainder to the three academic units proportionally, based on their generated semester credit hours.

Infrastructure

The College of Fine Arts has a growing number of computer laboratories, technology classrooms and other special purpose facilities:

Computer Laboratories

- Fine Arts Microcomputer Lab (FAML, located in the Fine Arts Library)
- Art Lab (ArtL, located in ART)
- Design Lab (DesL, located in ART)
- Music Microcomputer Lab (MML, located in MRH)
- Theatre and Dance Lab (TaDL, located in WIN)
- Specialty Laboratories
 - Electronic Music Studios (EMS, located in MRH)
 - Piano Keyboard Labs (2, located in MRH)
 - Music Education Lab (located in MRH)
 - Transmedia (located in ART)

Digital Photography (located in ART)
 Robotic Lighting (located in WIN)

Technology Classrooms

- ART 1.102, 1.110, 1.120, (General Purpose)
- DFA 2.204, 4.104
- MRH 2.608, 2.610, 2.634, m3.112, m 3.114, 2.604, 4.130
- WIN 2.112, B202, 1.134, 1.148, 2.136

Other Facilities

- Teleconference Suite (MRH 2.636)
- Electronic Classroom (located in FAML)
- Fine Arts Recording Studio (MRH 2.638)

Funding for IT programs and infrastructure

Annual funding for Information Technology increased by a little over 3% this year from \$1,112,527 in FY 2003-04 to \$1,148,716 in FY 2004-05 (projected). This number is an amalgam of several funding sources: the Fine Arts Instructional Technology Fee, recurrent and project-specific ITAC funding, state appropriated salaries and user fees. It does not include program or course specific fees, some of which are used for IT.

Overall IT Funding (not including course or program-specific fees)		FY 2003-04	FY 2004-05 (projected)	% increase
Fine Arts Instructional Technology Fee		\$572,598.00	\$594,767.00	3.87%
ITAC (recurrent)		\$113,903.00	\$117,320.00	3.00%
ITAC (project)		\$185,189.00	\$189,000.00	2.06%
State Appropriation		\$208,853.00	\$215,629.00	3.24%
User Fees		\$31,984.00	\$32,900.00	2.86%
Totals		\$1,112,527.00	\$1,149,616.00	3.33%

Best Practices

Help Desk partnership w/ITS

Given the relatively small size of Fine Arts, we are always interested in collaborating with other colleges and units on campus to extend our resources and play to our core strengths. Our “Help Desk” operation is a case in point. Several years ago, when it became apparent that we weren’t keeping up with the growing number of requests for desktop support, we began exploring the possibility of working with the ITS Help Desk

to bridge the gap. As we discussed possible arrangements with the then newly-hired John Hunter (manager of the ITS Help Desk), it became apparent that we had complimentary strengths, and a combination effort would provide much better service to College faculty and staff.

With the equivalent of two full-time workers doing desktop support, it was difficult to both answer a trouble line and visit users to install, configure and support desktop computers and software. Conversely, the ITS Help Desk had no capacity to visit users, but had an extensive and effective phone effort. We decided to try setting the Fine Arts help desk up as an “expert group” and redirect all Fine Arts support calls to the ITS operation. Fine Arts faculty and staff were instructed to call the “new reserved Fine Arts Help Desk”. The special number presented calls to the same body of ITS consultants used by the rest of campus, while facilitating the tracking of Fine Arts calls. If the problem persisted after the normal “triage” with the ITS consultant, the “trouble ticket” was forwarded through a custom website to the Fine Arts “expert group” for an on-site follow up.

Over the last 2-3 years the system has worked well. The volume of direct calls to our local staff has dropped by about 70% (most problems can be solved over the phone) and our consultants can spend more time with the problems that require on-site assistance. With the recent purchase and implementation of “Remedy” (a customizable software package often used for Help Desk trouble ticket routing), the system promises to be even more effective.

DASE partnership w/Liberal Arts

Similar to the Help Desk collaboration, we engaged in a project last year that has become known as the Liberal Arts Digital Archive Services (DASE). A joint effort of Liberal Arts, Fine Arts, and General Libraries, this project consists of building a set of applications for the collection, cataloging, and serving of digital media collections from all over The University. The project will give faculty and students the ability to search diverse collections of hundreds of thousands of images, videos, audio files, and other media. Users will be able to download files or organize them into online collections accessible from within DASE. A special feature gives faculty the ability to quickly create online slide shows and share them with students either online or projected in class. A two screen option in the slideshow feature will allow faculty teaching in dual screen auditoriums to organize and format dual screen shows and present different slides on each screen.

Prototypes of the first two modules of DASE are available for use. Media Browser allows users to search, organize personal collections, and create slideshows. Collection Builder allows collection managers to upload images, organize catalog records, and input metadata. These prototypes have limited sets of functionality and deal only with digital images. The prototypes are protected by password.

If you would like to take a look at DASE, please contact Peter Keane pkeane@mail.utexas.edu for passwords and instructions.

Development of DASE is going forward under funding from College IT fees, a 2004-2005 ITAC award, and a grant from the Utopia project. A joint request with Fine Arts and General Libraries for further development of The University-wide features of this project will be submitted under separate cover.

Use of Previous Academic Year Allocations

For FY 2004-05, Fine Arts requested \$325,935 and actually received \$189,000 in project funding as well as \$117,320 in recurrent funding. Another \$95,000 was awarded jointly with Liberal Arts for work on the Digital Archive Service (DASE).

Although Fine Arts actually spent \$199,894 in ITAC funding during FY 2003-04, only \$159,846 is actually shown in the following chart. These are the projects that were proposed in the last Vision Plan. The other funding went to departmental allocations and previous projects not yet completed. Since the ITAC project award for FY 2004-05 was less than that requested, some projects were not funded. Projects listed as “referred to department” were accomplished with departmental funds.

FY 2003-04 Fine Arts Request

Project Title	Estimated Cost	Status	
Portable Computer Classroom	\$33,460	Complete	\$34,125
Complete Six Smart Classrooms	\$30,000	Not Funded	
Technology Classroom upgrade for General-purpose Classroom - ART 1.110	\$30,000	Complete	\$34,251
Music Microcomputer Laboratory (MML) Upgrades	\$13,226	Referred to Department	
Electronic Music Studio (EMS) Upgrades	\$17,625	Not Funded	
Audio Workstation for Recording Technology Program	\$35,000	Not Funded	
Theatre and Dance Computer Laboratory (TaDL) Upgrades	\$34,635	Referred to Department	
Additional A/V for Theatre and Dance	\$8,554	Complete	\$8,049
Fine Arts Microcomputer Laboratory (FAML) Upgrades	\$20,800	Complete	\$17,179
Replacement Console for Control B	\$25,000	Not Funded	
Printing solution for FAML & TaDL	\$28,635	Not Funded	
Additional Wireless Coverage	\$50,000	In Progress	\$50,000
Total Requested	\$326,935	Funded	\$143,604

FY 2003-04 Joint Requests

Visual Resource Collection	\$45,000	In progress	\$11,042
Instruction Materials "Boot Camp"	\$65,500	Referred to College	\$5,200
Total Expenditures from FY 2003-04 ITAC Requests			\$159,846

Programs

Of the \$117,320 recurrent ITAC funding that Fine Arts received in FY 2004-05, the majority was split among the academic units to cover the routine upgrade and maintenance of their principal student computer laboratories. They each received an amount that was proportional to their student enrollment based on the last academic year. The next largest portion of recurrent funding was used to support the operation of the College central student computer lab (the Fine Arts Microcomputer Laboratory – FAML).

Fine Arts has, until recently, resisted using ITAC funding to cover recurrent staff costs, but continuing budgetary limitations have made it necessary to reconsider. Therefore, FY 2003-04 was the first time ITAC funding was used to cover some staff cost in support of the Visual Resource Collection (part of the Art History division) and to provide Web support of the College Student Division. These expenditures for FY 2004-05 and the previously mentioned departmental allocations are reflected in the figure below:

FY 2004-05 recurrent ITAC Allocation

Art	\$27,419
Music	\$34,253
Theatre	\$22,798
FAML	\$14,320
Desktop Support for the VRC	\$6,530
Web Support	\$12,000
Total	\$117,320

Infrastructure

Core Network improvements

The Fine Arts network infrastructure was last renovated prior to the “Y2K” event, and the routers, switches and related support equipment are nearing the end of their useful life. Using College and ITAC funding accumulated over the last two years, a major renovation was recently initiated. Improvements will include a new core router, new building switches and additional capacity to support new wireless capabilities. These improvements will result in gigabit backbone speeds, the ability to isolate individual machine ports (needed for new security demands) and better overall network efficiency. Most of the funding will be expended during the 2004-05 fiscal year and the project will be essentially complete by the fall of 2005.

Additional Wireless Coverage

A small amount of wireless coverage was added to the College in 2001, and this project will greatly enhance that coverage. By improving wireless service throughout the College, we intend to encourage students to bring their own portable computing

equipment so that the increasingly valuable computer lab space can be reserved for more specialized use. We anticipate about 70% coverage across the Fine Arts academic buildings – a reasonable trade-off between cost and benefit. Most of the funding will be expended during the 2004-05 fiscal year with project completion anticipated for the fall of 2005.

One-time Projects

Several projects were completed this year, including projects funded by previous ITAC awards. Existing funding was also used to enhance some projects, making it possible to upgrade those projects.

Portable Computer Classroom

This project was completed as proposed in the last Vision Plan. Students began using it in the fall of 2004.

Vocal Arts Lab

Originally proposed for FY 2001-02, this project was delayed by the need to modify the physical space. It was completed during the summer of 2004, and students began using it in the following fall semester.

Technology Classroom upgrade for General Purpose Classroom (ART 1.110, 1.120)

The original proposal (from the last Vision Plan) anticipated the completion of only one room. With savings from efficient purchasing (thanks in part to the Liberal Arts bulk purchase program) and the addition of some local ITAC balance, it was possible to complete two rooms. Both were ready for the fall of 2004.

Theatre and Dance Computer Lab Upgrades

Since the department had significant balances in their ITAC and other equipment funds, this project was referred to the department for completion. It was completed in time for the fall 2004 semester.

Additional A/V for Theatre and Dance

Completed as proposed.

Fine Arts Microcomputer Lab Upgrades

Completed as proposed

Needs and Proposed Use of Funds

Programs

Faculty Summer Technology “Boot Camp” - \$10,800

First proposed in a joint proposal with the Center for Instructional Technology (CIT) last year, the Faculty Summer Technology “Boot Camp” provides a way for faculty who do not yet use significant technology in their teaching to get a concentrated experience. A small stipend of \$1500 (plus fringe expenses) is paid to the faculty member upon the completion of five summer IT workshops conducted by the CIT, along with a proposal – suitable for submission to the ~FaSTex program – for a technology-enhanced instructional project. Last summer, Fine Arts funded four faculty, all of whom were accepted into the ~FaSTex program and are currently working on new instructional materials for their teaching. This program has a very modest cost, but promises a big impact as we encourage faculty to effectively use the technology infrastructure now established throughout the College.

Instructional Technology Support - \$12,000

As in the previous item, this was first suggested in a joint proposal with the Center for Instructional Technology (CIT) last year. As a follow-up to that proposal, we request funding to help faculty build instructional materials after they have completed the “Boot Camp” and ~FaSTex programs. We propose hiring a technology-savvy student to work with each faculty member who are incorporating technology in their teaching to complete the instructional materials prototyped in the ~FaSTex program. The CIT can help with the identification and training of such students. They will also, along with Fine Arts staff, help manage the projects. We believe that this relatively modest amount of funding will have a big impact on moving faculty toward more frequent and better use of the technology classrooms and other installed infrastructure.

Infrastructure

Technology Classroom Upgrades - \$60,000

This proposes the upgrade of the following existing technology classrooms in the College of Fine Arts: FAML (located in the Fine Arts Library), DFA 2.204, Recital Studio (located in MRH), MRH 2.636, Art 1.110 and 1.120 and the Art Auditorium. Some of the rooms (FAML, DFA 2.204, Recital Studio) were among the first built in the College – circa 1995 – and require new projection, sound and user interface equipment to more closely conform to the campus standard for technology classrooms. MRH 2.636 has a minimal equipment set and would be upgraded to a more complete expression of the campus standard. Art 1.110 and 1.120, although recently established as technology classrooms, require better projection equipment than originally purchased because of their deep shape. The existing projectors, still quite usable, will be moved to other rooms with older equipment. Finally, Fine Arts will participate in the “Inventing Classroom

2010” project with Liberal Arts and Engineering and the requested funding will fulfill Fine Arts responsibilities for that project.

FAML Computer upgrades - \$30,000

This proposes the routine replacement of desktop computing equipment in the Fine Arts Microcomputer Laboratory (FAML). It would replace 22 of the existing 34 machines, both Apple and Windows-based, that are now three or more years old, thus refreshing the facility and making it more suitable for the current software requirements.

Class Piano Projectors - \$6,000

The Class Piano Laboratories, located in MRH and used by all music majors, were upgraded to their current configuration three years ago. While the pianos, computers and software are still quite adequate for the student’s use, the projection equipment is failing faster than expected and this funding would replace those two devices.

One-time Projects

Transmedia Studio Technology Hub - \$56,500

In the Transmedia Area undergraduate students are acquainted with the historical development, critical ideas, and current practices pertaining to time-based art. The goal is to provide the digital technology assets required for the instruction of software and hardware application as it pertains to time-based art.

The proposed technology hub, consisting of 12 15” laptops, 12 digital camcorders, a storage cart, software and related support hardware, will provide for a secondary lab environment that will maximize the use of existing Transmedia space. Because of space constraints in the Art Building, an additional Transmedia computer lab is not a viable option. The proposed technology hub will allow the existing Transmedia Studio to be utilized as a temporary lab when needed. Additionally, the technology hub will provide students access to various dynamic media acquisition tools required for their course work. This is the top instructional technology priority for the Department of Art and Art History and the sole project they propose this year.

Three New Technology Classrooms (MRH) - \$40,500

The School of Music proposes the construction of three additional technology classrooms to enhance their existing inventory. All of the existing technology classrooms in the department are heavily used, and the department is unable to schedule the increasing number of classes requiring media equipment in the existing spaces. The design of the rooms would closely mirror existing facilities consisting of a sub-set of the established campus standard for technology classrooms.

Film Scoring Lab Acoustic Wall Treatment - \$11,500

The School of Music proposes funding the purchase and installation of acoustic wall treatment for a Film Scoring Studio facility now under construction in the department. Most of the equipment has already been purchased, but the space, previously used for departmental offices, requires acoustic remediation to be maximally effective.

Tascam/Gigasampler Project - \$10,000

This proposes the establishment of an ongoing partnership between TASCAM/Gigasampler and The University of Texas School of Music, in which faculty and students associated with the U. T. Electronic Music and Recording Technology areas would collaborate with representatives from TASCAM's Austin Research Center in research projects of mutual interest. TASCAM would support this research by donating various software and hardware items from their product line to the School of Music, and also by providing training to UT students and faculty in the use of these products, their theoretical basis, and in some of the techniques used in their development. In return, the UT School of Music would provide TASCAM with limited access to its studios, concert halls, and other facilities for use in approved projects. They would also develop a library of original Gigasampler-compatible sample sets, which would be made freely available on a UT ftp site.

Although TASCAM will provide the necessary software and some hardware needed for the project and student's use, computing platforms will be needed to perform the work. Therefore, the project requests the purchase of 10 dedicated, rack-mounted CPUs and a variety of Gigasampler-compatible third-party software.

TASCAM would provide training of UT students in room/body resonance convolution modeling, sampling, and other aspects of TASCAM/Gigasampler technology. In addition, UT students would benefit greatly from being able to observe TASCAM engineers recording impulse responses at UT, as well as from the process of developing our own sample libraries.

Flatbed Press Site Workstations - \$21,000

This proposes the establishment of three graphics and video workstations in the Theatre Design Studio that the Department of Theatre and Dance now occupies at Flatbed Press. Flatbed Press is a remote space first used as a gallery by the Department of Art and Art History and now as a shared design and gallery space for Theatre and Dance as well. With the addition of computer workstations, students will be able to do their work in the space, thus multiplying the limited computer lab space that already exists in the Winship building. Three video and graphics capable workstations, scanners and graphics tablets, a large-format color printer and the necessary software will be purchased with the funding.