

**Office of Graduate Studies
Information Technology Vision Plan
2005-2006**

Summary of Requests

The Office of Graduate Studies Information Technology Vision Plan for 2004-05 included requests for funds for three areas of the Graduate School: the Professional Development and Community Engagement program, the International Teaching Assistant Program (ITA) and the office's student information center. Although our request was not funded, we were able to secure the equipment needed for the ITA program and for the student information center.

For 2005-06, we are requesting funds to upgrade the used equipment we placed in our student information center. We are also asking that our request from 2004-2005, relating to the Professional Development and Community Engagement program, be funded. If funded, the program will be able to increase the number of graduate students it serves by making the information, most requested by graduate students, accessible twenty-four hours a day.

2005-2006 request for ITAC funds for the following student-based initiatives:

	ITAC Request
Student Information Center	
Replacement computers	\$ 7,000
Professional Development and Community Engagement:	
Digital presentations and training modules	\$ 24,000
GRA (.25 FTE) to assist with proposed initiatives	7,000
Maintenance of completed modules	<u>2,000</u>
	\$ 33,000
Total ITAC Request	\$ 40,000

Overview of Current IT Programs and Infrastructure

Vision/Mission/Goals of Unit

The Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies is responsible for the overall quality and vitality of graduate studies at the University of Texas at Austin. The Office of Graduate Studies operates under the direction of the Vice Provost and Graduate Dean and is charged with providing the services and support needed to not only sustain the Graduate School, but also to ensure its progress and increase its value to the University community. Pride is taken in providing valuable services, not found in individual academic departments, to more than 10,000+ graduate students. The office awards more than 700 doctoral degrees and more than 2,500 master's degrees each year.

The Office of Graduate Studies provides a wide range of services to the University community, including graduate students, members of graduate studies committees, graduate advisers, and graduate coordinators. The office is organized by the following areas of responsibility:

- Graduate Recruitment and Outreach
- Graduate and International Admissions
- Student Services
- Fellowships
- Professional Development and Community Engagement
- Graduate Assembly and Legislation
- Portfolios
- Technology and Web Administration
- Faculty Development
- Awards
- Administrative Services

Programs

The Office of Graduate Studies does not have any programs that receive recurring funds at this time.

Infrastructure

The administrative staff currently use 27 Apple computers and 2 Dell PCs. The office has one file server which is secured with firewall and antivirus software and backed up nightly by Student Information Services which provides LAN support to our department. We have one in house Systems Administrator responsible for setting up computers, upgrading the software and virus protections, and providing technical support to users. Software and operating systems are kept up-to-date. Within the past year 11 of the oldest computers were replaced with new computers enabling us to create the student information center with 2 of the older Apple computers that were replaced. This recent upgrading has eliminated down time due to hardware problems in the office. We have adopted a replacement/upgrade policy that works within our current IT budget over the next five years.

Current and proposed funding sources for IT programs and infrastructure

The Office of Graduate Studies primarily uses fee income (Option III and Certification Fee) and institutional allowance funds from the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program to fund IT programs and infrastructure.

Best Practices that have significantly improved IT programs.

During 2001-2002, the Office of Graduate Studies committed a portion of its IT budget to develop a new online graduate student orientation and an online ethics training program. These initiatives broadened the office's thinking on graduate student information resources and the automation of student services. Online services to graduate students were improved and the resources are now available to students at all times.

During 2003-2004, the office reached an agreement with the Student Information Systems Team (SIS) to have the office's Sr. Systems Analyst join their staff and devote 100% time to systems development. Now the Graduate School benefits from the expertise of the entire SIS team and is able to collaborate more effectively. Our Application for Candidacy form has recently been automated and the office is participating in a pilot program for the electronic submission of theses and dissertations to University Microfilms (UMI). Work on these automation processes has advanced our progress exponentially under our new system.

Use of Previous Academic Year Allocations

The Office of Graduate Studies has not received ITAC funding in previous academic years.

Needs and Proposed Use of Funds – One-time Projects

Graduate Student Information Center

The Office of Graduate Studies was remodeled this past summer and the reception area with the stained glass window from the class of 1909 was converted into a graduate student lounge and information center. Two computers were placed in the area to allow students to submit electronic dissertations, upload dissertations to UMI, check for bars, pay fees on line, update personal information, manage registration, make grade status changes and check e-mail. Having computer access for students in the same proximity as student services staff expedites student matters.

Funding Request

The funds requested for the student information center are as follows:

Description	Quantity	Total Cost	ITAC Request
IMAC	2	\$7,000	\$ 7,000

Professional Development and Community Engagement (PDCE)

The PDCE program of the Office of Graduate Studies has been growing in popularity every year. The program promotes the professional development of graduate students through courses, workshops, internships, and community engagement opportunities. Through these programs and projects, PDCE encourages and supports graduate students at the University of Texas to become successful professionals, leaders and innovators who impact the communities they serve.

As stated above, the Office of Graduate Studies successfully developed an online new graduate student orientation and an online ethics training program. The office worked with the Center for Instructional Technologies to develop the online ethics training and we would like to follow the same model with several workshops conducted each year by PDCE faculty. These funds would be used to create on-line training modules to complement and provide additional support for PDCE courses and workshops. The creation of on-line resources for graduate students would enable PDCE to serve students who are unable to attend workshops, thereby increasing the reach and impact of the program. PDCE will use ITAC funds first to develop and deliver resources in the following areas: Grantwriting, Dissertation Writing and Publishing, and Career Strategies. These priorities are clear and consistent in surveys of graduate students. Over time, we will increase our offerings to include all the areas in which PDCE provides courses and workshops, including ethics, teaching methods, consulting, and multi-cultural communication.

Specifically, ITAC funding will enable PDCE to digitally record workshops and present them on-line. They will therefore be accessible to students unable to attend, or to students who do attend but would like refreshers. Additionally, ITAC funding will enable PDCE to provide

templates, tools, and other interactive sites, utilizing expertise in on-line learning, graphic design, and web usability.

Finally, ITAC funding will enable PDCE to help create and sustain graduate student networks on campus, using various types of on-line communities ("linked-in" style networks, and blogging, for example). This will enable graduate students to share ideas and resources in areas of common intellectual and community interest. As importantly, it will help build a cohesive graduate student community on campus.

All of the on-line resources that PDCE will develop will be done in consultation with graduate students, graduate advisors and coordinators, and graduate faculty.

Funding Request

The funds requested for digital presentations and training modules are as follows:

Description	Quantity	Total Cost	ITAC Request
Consultation with Center for Instructional Technology for digital presentations and training modules	2	\$24,000	\$24,000
GRA (.5 FTE) to assist with proposed initiatives	.5	\$14,000	\$ 7,000
Maintenance of completed digital training modules	2	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Total		\$40,000	\$33,000