College of Fine Arts Vision Plan – FY 2008-2009

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 existing infrastructure is aging, and as a result, requires ever more refresh and upgrade. In the last year, the college made a substantial effort in both funding and staff time to address maintenance issues – a trend we expect to continue.

Overview -

Mission

Originally formed in 1995 to address the growing needs of the College, the Information Technology division works to enhance instruction, research and administration in the College of Fine Arts.

. . . Leveraging existing resources

While we continue to add to the technology inventory in Fine Arts, many of those additions are general-purpose instructional technology to existing classrooms – finishing the build-out of basic technology for teaching. Although there are still requests for specialized equipment and software we intend to satisfy, students are increasingly equipped with their own technology; laptop computers, iPods and other mobile devices that can be leveraged in instructional efforts. Even the most basic laptops are very capable now, and the addition of relatively modest software can provide many of the same capabilities that were previously deployed in specialized labs. Sound and Video editing are great examples of this new capability, with many personal machines already equipped for sophisticated media production without adding anything at all. Likewise, third-party offerings of web-based software extend the capabilities of many computers in compelling ways. With this in mind, it seems reasonable to begin shifting our efforts from the supply of specialized hardware and software to improving basic infrastructure like classroom presentation technology, wireless connectivity, and comfortable and functional places for students to work with their mobile devices on campus.

Important cooperative efforts

Much of the existing inventory of instructional technology is underutilized. Besides the desire for more electrical outlets in student areas (with which to power all their

computers, cell phones and iPods), better faculty use of classroom and online technology is a common student refrain. With the sometimes-frantic pace of deployment over the last few years, encouraging use of new services along with instruction on how best to use them have not been given adequate attention. Therefore, Fine Arts, along with Liberal Arts, the Division of Instructional Innovation and Assessment (DIIA) and others, will forward a separate joint proposal this year to expand a successful summer technology program that provides help to faculty who wish to improve their use of instructional technology.

A number of colleges and schools, including Fine Arts, are participating in another joint proposal to promote the instructional use of podcasting on campus. Recent improvements in software and the extensive campus classroom technology infrastructure make it especially practical to deploy this service more widely.

Finally, the "Digital Archive Service", a joint project between Liberal Arts and Fine Arts, will be the subject of a joint proposal. In use since 2005, and with ITAC support for the last four years, we continue expanding the project to include more collections and have begun moving some of the source digital assets to General Libraries' servers.

Summary of Requests

The College of Fine Arts requests $244,000 for a variety of projects this year. A summary or the projects is provided in the table below:

Technology Classroom Upgrades	Fine Arts	$40,000
Digital Photography Classroom Laboratory	Art & Art History	$44,000
MBE Recording Control Room/Lab	School of Music	$58,400
Recording Technology Classroom	School of Music	$70,600
New Technology Classrooms, WIN 2.116, 1.120	Theatre & Dance	$11,000
Theatre & Dance Microcomputer Laboratory (TADL) Technology Refresh	Theatre & Dance	$20,000

Overview of Current IT Programs and Infrastructure

The College of Fine Arts, one of 17 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, 221 faculty and 204 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

1962 students (fall, 2006)
221 Tenure-track Faculty
204 Classified and Professional Staff

IT Division Services

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

IT Staffing

College – 10 FTE, 13 part-time (includes T&D)
Art – 2 FTE, 13 part-time
Music – 3 FTE, 10 part-time

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 portion (about 52%) for classroom, web, helpdesk and network support, 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

- Richard T. and Jan J. Roberts Reading Room (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 in number, located in MRH)
  Vocal Arts Lab
  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, 3.218, 4.104
- MRH 2.604, 2.608, 2.610, 2.614, 2.634, 2.636, m3.112, m 3.114, 4.115, 4.126, 4.130
- WIN 2.112, B202, 1.134, 1.148, 2.136

Other Facilities

- Teleconference Suite (MRH 2.636)
- Fine Arts Recording Studio (MRH 2.638)

Funding for IT programs and infrastructure

Annual funding for Information Technology is expected to increase by a little over 1% this year, from $1,157,438 in FY 2006-07 to $1,174,958 in FY 2007-08 (budgeted). 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.

Overall IT Funding			**2006-07 Actual**	**2007-08 Budget**	**% Change**
Fine Arts Instructional Tech	19-3490-41		$ 501,204	$ 514,240	2.60%
ITAC (Recurrent)	19-9708-00	**	$ 114,760	$ 115,583	0.72%
ITAC (One Time Project)	19-9708-00		$ 162,861	$ 159,009	-2.37%
ITAC Digital Image Lib * see note below			$ 30,000	$ 29,290	-2.37%
State Appropriation	20-3480-10		$ 215,183	$ 219,488	2.00%
User Fees (Recording)	19-3490-18		$ 27,405	$ 27,000	-1.48%
Other Local (Design)	19-3490-39		$ 67,729	$ 68,948	1.80%
Other Local (Equip-Newcomb)	19-3490-48		$ 38,296	$ 41,400	8.11%
	Totals		**$ 1,157,438**	**$1,174,958**	**1.51%**

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, we explored the possibility of combining our effort with that of the ITS Help Desk. Because of the apparent complimentary strengths, and the fact that a combination effort would provide much better service to College faculty and staff, the arrangement made sense.

With 2.5 "Full Time Equivalents" for 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 set the Fine Arts Help Desk up as an "expert group" and redirected 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 5-6 years the system has worked well. Although no statistics are available to confirm this, we suspect that 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, three years ago we engaged in a project 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 gives faculty and students the ability to search diverse collections of hundreds of thousands of images, videos, audio files, and other media. Users are 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 allows faculty teaching in dual screen auditoriums to organize and format dual screen shows and present different slides on each screen.

DASE is now in production and heavily used. "Media Browser", the search, browse and display portion of DASE, allows users to search, organize personal collections, and create slideshows. "Collection Builder", the collection maintenance tool, allows collection managers to upload images, organize catalog records, and input metadata. These applications have constantly expanding sets of functionality and work primarily with digital images at present, although some video and sound files are contained within the system. In order to address intellectual property issues, access is gained by using an EID login.

Virtual Server and Storage Project with College of Communication

Recent concerns regarding data security and the prospect of more restrictive regulation make additional efforts to protect data advisable. Complicating factors like the increasing size of storage devices in desktop systems, the more frequent use of large media, and the impracticality of backing up data for hundreds of machines to large, network mounted tape drives suggest that new strategies are required. With the recent purchase of a large Storage Area Network (SAN) by the College of Communication, one such new strategy has become available.

Earlier, Fine Arts staff investigated various network attached storage options for our users, but the modest funding available precluded all but a few, sort-term solutions. Conversations in the Tech Deans group revealed a collaboration opportunity with the College of Communication in their project, with the additional possibility of reducing the number of physical servers we manage. To initiate the collaboration, Fine Arts contributed the funding necessary for additional virtual server licenses and hardware capacity needed to support our users. IT staff then developed scripts that leverage the campus ID management and Active Directory systems (provided by ITS) and the College of Communication Storage Area Network. Taken together, we anticipate better desktop management and a substantial amount of secure, convenient storage for each faculty and staff member.

We continue to deploy a system where each Fine Arts faculty and staff member can have up to 2 Gigabytes of managed storage, available both on and off campus and accessible through the user's EID. Additionally, current physical servers (many running instances of Filemaker Server) are being converted to virtual machines, leveraging the same installation to provide more reliable service while reducing the amount of staff time needed to manage those servers. This project could ultimately be scaled up to meet the needs of a larger part of campus.

Use of Previous Academic Year Allocations

For FY 2006-07, Fine Arts requested $339,167 and actually received $159,009 in project funding as well as $115,583 in recurrent funding. Another $30,000 was awarded jointly with Liberal Arts for continuing work the "Digital Archive Service" (DASe).

Fine Arts actually spent $158,119 in ITAC funding (recurrent and project) during FY 2007-08, and expects to expend nearly $300,000 in project funding awarded for 2007-08, and supplemented by reserves as shown on the following chart. For the most part, these are the projects that were proposed in the last Vision Plan.

FY 2006-07 Fine Arts Request		
Project Title	**Estimated Cost**	**Status**
Technology Classroom Upgrades	$40,000	Complete
Add Technology to ART 2.206, 3.432, 3.433	$41,500	Funded
Add Technology to MBE 3.134, MRH 6.248, 2.628	$29,000	Funded
Recital Studio Surround Sound System	$25,000	Funded
New Technology Classrooms, WIN 1.164, 2.138, 1.108, 1.154	$35,000	Funded
A/V Equipment for Anna Hiss Gym	$2,200	Funded
Fine Arts Student Center	$45,000	Funded
Meso-America Center	58,000	Funded
Total	**$275,700**	

Programs

Of the $115,583 recurrent ITAC funding received for FY 2007-08, about half will be split among the academic units to cover the routine upgrade and maintenance of their principal student computer laboratories. As in past years, each will receive an amount proportional to their semester credit hour production during the fall of the previous academic year. The remaining portion will be used to fund Web, Classroom and Desktop support that benefits the entire college.

FY 2007-08 recurrent ITAC Allocation			
Art	$	18,022	15.59%
Music	$	22,368	19.35%
Theatre	$	15,002	12.98%
Web, Classroom, Desktop Support	$	60,191	52.08%
Total	**$**	**115,583**	**100.00%**

Beginning in fiscal year 2007-08, recurrent funding retained by the college to cover some IT staff costs increased from 28% to 52%.

Infrastructure

Fine Arts Student Center Performance Space/Classroom - $45,000

After several years delay, work finally began during the summer of 2007 to renovate the ground floor of the Doty Fine Arts building. The only remaining tenant, the Fine Arts Career Center, has been moved to temporary quarters, and as of this writing, the demolition is complete. The planned renovation will change the entire space, expand the square footage by enclosing part of the patio, and remove physical barriers that hide the ground floor from the street – all intended to re-purpose the space as a Student Services Center.

The new center will include the Fine Arts Student Division (currently located in the Dean's Suite), the Career Center, a modest food service, a combination classroom and performance space, and an electronic gallery. While substantial support for the project already exists from an outside donor, this funding will help with the technology needs of the project, namely the combination space.

The classroom and performance space will be equipped with the standard classroom compliment with upgraded an upgraded sound system and acoustic treatment, and a programmable lighting system. The exact configuration of the space is likely to change as plans develop, but at present it is expected to provide space for 25-30 people.

Mesoamerica Center (former Blanton Space) - $58,000

While delays in the completion of "phase 2" of the new Blanton Museum have postponed this project, the new Mesoamerica Center will occupy the ART building in a space formerly occupied by part of the Blanton Museum. The project will house a significant lab and studio space devoted to the study of Pre-Columbian art and archaeology, with an emphasis on digital photo archives, drafting, the production of publications, and the continued upkeep of our two websites. A critical component of the Center will include undergraduate and graduate students, providing them opportunities to work with faculty on original research in the field. One major endeavor will involve the photographic processing and drawing associated with the Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions Project (based at Harvard's Peabody Museum) with which David Stuart is affiliated.

Students and affiliated faculty from the Department of Art and Art History and related departments (Anthropology, Linguistics, etc.) will make use of the Center's space and equipment for their own research needs, allowing students to work in a state-of-the-art laboratory alongside world-famous scholars and faculty. In addition, the facility will be an on-campus headquarters for archaeological field projects in Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras, where a number of cutting edge digital technologies will be tested and applied. These digital technologies will allow students the opportunity to engage in research on newly discovered buildings, monuments, and artifacts, which are often in remote areas of Central America, or are located in tombs and caves that have been sealed off to protect them from looters and vandals.

Classroom Maintenance and Upgrades - $40,000

Several classrooms were upgraded this year with new projection systems and refurbished consoles. Since the first technology classrooms were constructed in 1993 and the college now maintains 22 such facilities, we anticipate a continuous maintenance process for the foreseeable future.

Needs and Proposed Use of Funds

Programs and One Time Projects

Digital Photography Classroom Laboratory – $44,000

The Department of Art and Art History has incorporated digital and computer technologies into the curricula of each of our four divisions over the past fifteen years. Departmental Computer Labs have been added to areas to support classes and curriculum, including the Design Lab (DESL), Studio Lab (ARTL) which includes the Digital Art Foundations class room, the Transmedia Lab, the Printmaking computer node and the Photography computer node.

Great strides have been made in recent years to incorporate Digital technologies into our graduate and undergraduate programs as their importance has continued to increase dramatically in the fields of Studio Art, Design, Art Education, and Art History. The Department is committed to continuing this process of developing and improving the digital and technological resources in our curriculum and programs. However, with this dramatic increase in the technological and digital influence on the arts, comes the dramatic increase in the student demand for access to the tools necessary to produce contemporary artwork.

The current proposal seeks funding for a solution that will meet the current needs of Photography and Digital Photography students. The proposed Digital Photography classroom will provide for a lab environment that will maximize the use of an existing Photography classroom that is currently used as a meeting room and pin-up space. The proposed Digital Photo classroom will allow an existing Photography classroom to be utilized as a Digital Photo classroom and as a Digital Photography lab when needed. Additionally, the Digital Classroom/Lab will provide student access to various dynamic media acquisition tools (scanners and cameras) and printers required for on-going undergraduate course work as well as Graduate research for students in Photography/Digital Photography.

MBE Recording Control Room/Lab - $40,000

Recording Technology Classroom - $70,600

The School of Music has implemented a new Program in Audio Recording Technology to prepare students for the more technologically centered music industry of today and tomorrow. This program has been carefully designed to teach musicians the Art and Science of Recording Music and prepare them to be the content providers of the future.

With the UT - Audio Recording Technology Program (UT-ART) now accepting students and the hands-on nature of this program, there has been a tremendous demand on the existing recording studio facilities. Both of these projects are intended to address this need. The program shares facilities with the School of Music's Recital Archival Recording program. Development of the Longhorn Band Control Room will provide a dedicated student facility for the recording, editing and mixing of music in a top notch modern facility. Currently, the UT-ART Program has 28 students and will grow to a total of 48 within 2 years, increasing demand for studio time. In addition to the benefit to the program, it will allow the School of Music to record ensembles in MBE 2.114 (the Longhorn Band Hall). This provides us with a very large recording studio facility suitable for orchestral and wind ensemble recording in a true studio environment. Previously, this has required School of Music ensembles to travel to Dallas, at great expense, for this sort of recording.

New Technology Classrooms WIN 2.116, 1.120 - $11,000

Theatre & Dance Microcomputer Laboratory (TADL) "Refresh" - $20,000

Both of these projects are consistent with the notion of expanding the Technology Classroom inventory and maintaining existing infrastructure for instructional use. Using existing funds, the college will add presentation technology to other classrooms in the Winship building this year including WIN 1.164, 2.138, 1.108, and 1.154. We request

additional funding for WIN 2.116 and 1.120. Likewise, the Theatre and Dance Microcomputer Laboratory (TADL) could use an equipment and software refresh. Half of the anticipated $40,000 price tag will come from existing funding, with the remainder requested in this plan.

Infrastructure

Technology Classroom Upgrades - $40,000

With the addition of three classrooms this year, Fine Arts now has an inventory of 22 technology classrooms. They represent an estimated $660,000 in investment given that each of them costs an average of $25,000 to $30,000 to implement. These classrooms have been installed over the last 11 years, and a staggered program of maintenance and refurbishment is now appropriate. During FY 2005-06 several of them received new projection systems, touch panels and other replacement parts and upgrades – a continuing effort in comprehensive refreshment for the college. Experience has shown that a reasonable annual maintenance budget for such an inventory is between 5% and 10% of its value. We therefore request $40,000 for technology classroom maintenance this year.