

College of Fine Arts Vision Plan – FY 2009-2010

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.

Nevertheless, we are committed to encouraging innovation. Each of the three Fine Arts academic units have proposed projects that will markedly improve the integration of technology into their teaching missions. Each takes advantage of current technology trends; the adoption of High Definition video standards, high-quality digital audio standards and automated content distribution systems. More than just adding new technology however, the College is committed to improving the adoption of new and existing technologies. To that end, we will once again sponsor faculty participation in the Summer Faculty Technology Seminars – a joint effort between Fine Arts and Liberal Arts for the third year in a row.

Summary of Requests

The College of Fine Arts requests \$259,000 for a variety of projects this year. A summary of the projects is provided in the table below:

Technology Classroom Upgrades	Fine Arts	\$40,000
Transmedia HD Lab Upgrade	Art & Art History	\$69,000
Orchestral Recording Control - MBE 3.118	School of Music	\$28,200
Choir Recording Control - MBE 3.102	School of Music	\$46,800
Winship Classroom Upgrades: Campus Standards and Podcasting WIN B204, 1.134, 2.180, 2.112	Theatre & Dance	\$45,000
Summer Faculty Technology Seminars	Fine Arts	\$30,000

Needs and Proposed Use of Funds

Infrastructure

Technology Classroom Upgrades - \$40,000

With the addition of five classrooms this year, and substantial improvements to five others, Fine Arts now has an inventory of 27 technology classrooms. Together, they represent a substantial investment in instructional infrastructure. These classrooms have been installed over the last 12 years, and a staggered program of maintenance and refurbishment continues. During FY 2007-08 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. It is worth noting that the College identified funding and hired an additional technician – an effort to address the increasing support needs of the faculty who use those rooms.

Summer Faculty Technology Seminars - \$30,000

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 continue and expand the successful summer technology program that provides help to faculty who wish to improve their use of instructional technology. The requested funding will be used in that effort.

Programs and One Time Projects

Transmedia HD Lab Upgrade – \$69,000

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.

The Transmedia area, which is part of Studio Art, encompasses video art, performance art and digital time-based arts (digital audio and video acquisition, motion graphics, 2D and 3D modeling and animation). The Transmedia computer lab needs a comprehensive retooling of its computers in order to achieve a full transition to HD (High Definition Video) and to augment the use of current and future software programs for the curriculum. The request to refresh the computers will allow for support of current technological standards that are relevant to an up-to-date time-based media arts computer lab. The funding will be used to purchase 13 Apple MacPro computers and 13 30-inch Cinema Display monitors needed to replace aging computers and monitors. This project is part of a larger goal to completely retool the Transmedia Computer Lab in support of 3D, animation and High Definition Video.

Orchestral Recording Control, MBE 3.118 - \$28,200

Choir Recording Control, MBE 3.102 - \$46,800

With the installation of new wire conduit (thanks to the Provost's small capital projects improvement fund) and new wiring and patch panels in the three major rehearsal halls in Music Building East (MBE), we have taken the first step in providing much needed laboratory space for the University of Texas Audio Recording Technology (UT-ART) Program of the Butler School of Music. In order to complete this project, we must modify and outfit the three associated control rooms that have sat fallow (in a recording sense) since their construction in the 1960's. Funding to modify the first of the three rooms, MBE 3.502, was obtained from FY 2008-09 ITAC funding, and will be completed during that year. A description of the overall project is included below.

MBE 3.502 LHB Control

The purpose of this facility is to provide complete recording and mixing facilities. This will serve as the primary student mixing environment and will be available all times the building is open. The recording environment is Longhorn Band Hall primarily, but access lines between this facility and master patch in the RMH studios can allow recording in other location around the BSoM. This requires that this control room be include in the BSoM TV 'network'. As a mixing facility, this will be the primary student mixing room and will support courses MUS 316N, MUS 325M, MUS 325N and all upper division courses as a laboratory space. It will also be the primary surround sound mixing room.

The space will require a total refurbishing, including painting and the installation of proper acoustic treatment. This portion of the project would be ideal as a teaching/learning experience for advanced students interested in Control Room and Musical Acoustics, which could provide a seminal course of 3-6 independent studies. Assistant Professor Mark Sarisky would teach this course/studies.

After proper acoustics are installed, then it will be necessary to wire and equip the studio. Again, this is a fine project for advanced recording students, teaching the fundamentals of installation and wiring and providing experience soldering and installing in a professional setting.

MBE 3.118 Orchestral Control

The purpose of this facility is to provide recording and mixing in the Pro Tools LE/Logic environments (all native DAW systems) to support student laboratories for MUS 316N, MUS 325M, MUS 325N and all upper division classes. The recording environment is the Orchestral Rehearsal Hall. Because the Orchestral Rehearsal Hall is more available during the evening hours, this will be a primary recording studio for student projects, ranging from rock and pop to classical and jazz.

This control room is partially completed and will have surround sound monitoring.

MBE 3.102 Choir Control

Designed as a *Production Studio*, this control room will serve as a student laboratory and workspace for creating music using modern recording technology and synthesis. Hip hop, R'nB and electro-acoustic music, film soundtracks and video games all use these modern computer based production techniques and this is where the students will learn in a hands on environment. This studio will also provide additional mixing and recording space, using the Choir room as a live recording environment.

Winship Classroom Upgrades: Campus Standards and Podcasting WIN B204, 1.134, 2.180, 2.112 - \$45,000

As mentioned elsewhere in this document, Fine Arts has moved as quickly as possible to add presentation and instructional technology to classrooms around the college. Because funding is always limited, a subset of the campus classroom standard is sometimes deployed in order to get some functionality into as many rooms as possible. This project has three objectives: provide an updated and more complete implementation of the campus standard in three existing technology-enhanced classrooms, add that functionality to a fourth room, and add podcast-based classroom-capture technology to all four.

The Theatre and Dance acting and dance programs will benefit especially from the addition of classroom capture technology since a significant portion the instruction depends on capturing student “practicum” during class for later review by faculty and students. Currently this is accomplished with a number of video camcorders. By capturing to an online “podcast” medium, classroom activities will be more easily and securely accessed using web technologies. This project also specifically leverages the joint podcast proposal funding by ITAC for FY 2008-09.

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

We continue to add to the technology inventory in Fine Arts, from adding general-purpose instructional technology to providing specialized laboratory equipment. Students are increasingly equipped with their own technology however; laptop computers, iPods and other mobile devices can be leveraged for instructional purposes. 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 equipped for sophisticated media production without additional hardware or software. Likewise, third-party offerings of web-based software extend the capabilities of many computers in compelling ways. With this in mind, we think it is also important to maintain and improve basic infrastructure like classroom presentation technology, wireless connectivity, and comfortable and functional places for students to work with their mobile devices on campus. This year, for example, saw the completion of the Fine Arts Student Services Center (ground floor of the Doty Fine Arts Building) – equipped with pervasive wireless Internet, dozens of power outlets, varied and comfortable work surfaces and seating, a student-curated art gallery, and a new O's Café.

Important cooperative efforts

A number of colleges and schools, including Fine Arts, were recently awarded ITAC funding to promote the instructional use of podcasting on campus. Recent improvements in software and the extensive campus classroom technology infrastructure now make it especially practical to deploy this service more widely.

Also, the “Digital Archive Service”, a joint project between Liberal Arts and Fine Arts, continues to improve and gain both faculty and student acceptance. In use since 2005, and with ITAC support for several years, we continue expanding the project to include more collections and have made substantial progress in moving some of the source digital assets to University Libraries' servers.

Overview of Current IT Programs and Infrastructure

The College of Fine Arts, one of 18 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, 226 faculty and 223 classified and professional staff, it could be described 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

1852 students (fall, 2007)
226 Tenure-track Faculty
223 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 – 11 FTE, 13 part-time (includes T&D)
Art – 2 FTE, 13 part-time
Music – 3 FTE, 9 part-time

Programs

Recurrent ITAC funding is used to support the routine operation of the major student computer laboratories and IT infrastructure. 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 and Technology-enhanced spaces

- Richard T. and Jan J. Roberts Reading Room (located in the Fine Arts Library)
- Fine Arts Student Services Center (Ground floor, Doty Fine Arts Building)
- 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)
- Teleconference Suite (MRH 2.636)
- Fine Arts Recording Studio (MRH 2.638)

- Specialty Laboratories
 - Electronic Music Studios (EMS, located in MRH)
 - Piano Keyboard Labs (2 in number, located in MRH)
 - Multiple Recording Control Rooms (located in MBE)
 - 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), 2.206, 3.432, 3.433
- 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, 6.248, 6.628
- WIN 2.112, B202, 1.134, 1.148, 2.136

Funding for IT programs and infrastructure

Annual funding for Information Technology is expected to increase by almost 2% this year, from \$1,174,958 in FY 2007-08 to \$1,197,913 in FY 2008-09 (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		2007-08	2008-09	% Change
		Actual	Budget	
Fine Arts Instructional Tech	19-3490-41	\$ 514,240	\$ 522,809	1.67%
ITAC (Recurrent)	19-9708-00 **	\$ 115,583	\$ 116,842	1.09%
ITAC (One Time Project)	19-9708-00	\$ 159,009	\$ 155,000	-2.52%
ITAC Digital Image Lib * see note below		\$ 29,290	\$ 29,290	0.00%
State Appropriation	20-3480-10	\$ 219,488	\$ 226,275	3.09%
User Fees (Recording)	19-3490-18	\$ 27,000	\$ 33,000	22.22%
Other Local (Design)	19-3490-39	\$ 68,948	\$ 70,813	2.70%
Other Local (Equip-Newcomb)	19-3490-48	\$ 41,400	\$ 43,884	6.00%
Totals		\$1,174,958	\$1,197,913	1.95%

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 6-7 years the system has worked well. Although statistics are not yet complete 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 ongoing 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, five 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, short-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 2008-09, Fine Arts requested \$244,000 and actually received \$155,000 in project funding as well as \$115,583 in recurrent funding. Another \$150,000 was awarded jointly with 12 other colleges and schools for the project: “Automated Instructional Video, Podcasting, and Blogging”. Additionally additional funding was awarded jointly for the further development of the “Digital Archive Service” (DASe).

Fine Arts actually spent \$329,942 in ITAC funding (recurrent and project) during FY 2007-08, and expects to spend a similar amount during FY 2008-09. With some modest revisions, these are projects that were proposed in the last Vision Plan.

FY 2008-09 Fine Arts Projects		
Project Title	Estimated Cost	Status
Technology Classroom Upgrades	\$40,000	Funded
Digital Photography Classroom Laboratory	\$44,000	Funded
MBE Recording Control Room/Lab	\$70,264	Funded (revised Budget)
Recording Technology Classroom	\$70,600	Deferred
New Technology Classrooms, WIN 2.116, 1.120,	\$11,000	Funded
Theatre & Dance Microcomputer Laboratory (TADL) Technology Refresh	\$20,000	Funded

Infrastructure

Of the \$115,583 recurrent ITAC funding received for FY 2008-09, 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 benefit the entire college.

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 27 such facilities, we anticipate a continuous maintenance process for the foreseeable future.

Programs and One-Time Projects

As indicated in the chart above (FY 2008-09 Fine Arts Projects), we intend to fund five projects initially proposed in last year's Vision Plan. Descriptions of those projects are included in the Appendix to this document.

Appendix 1

Programs and One-Time Projects

Proposed: Fine Arts Vision Plan, 2008-09; Funded FY 2008-09

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.