

Lyndon B. Johnson

School of Public Affairs

1999-2000 Information Technology Vision Plan

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Part 1: Executive Summary

The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs is a graduate component of The University of Texas at Austin. The mission of the School is to improve the quality of governance of public institutions by preparing graduate students for careers in government, organizing research to promote effective public policy and management, providing continuing education for public service professionals, and fostering community involvement through discussion and debate on issues of public concern. From its inception, the LBJ School has offered an academically progressive program aimed at raising the level of preparedness for careers in government by integrating public policy theory and practice. As the student body has grown, the School has expanded the program options. Master's-level program options now available include a regular master of public affairs program (full-time and part-time); a mid-career program; and eight joint degree programs with other departments and professional schools (the School of Law, Graduate School of Business, College of Engineering, Institute of Latin American Studies, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Center for Asian Studies, Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies, and College of Communication). The School offers a Ph.D. program that provides interdisciplinary, doctoral-level training in policy research, analysis, and practice.

The LBJ School of Public Affairs completed a detailed *Strategic Information Plan* (approved March 25, 1993), a more general *LBJ School Strategic Plan* (March 1996), and the *Information Technology Vision Plan for 1996-1997* and *Information Technology Vision Plan for 1997-1998*. All of these plans express the LBJ School's commitment to incorporating computer and information systems into all aspects of student work, teaching, research, and administration. This commitment is exemplified in the following goals highlighted in the various plans:

- To infuse computers into the curriculum so that they are universally accessible and regarded as a teaching/homework tool as normal as blackboard and chalk or pencil and paper;
- To improve the LBJ School's teaching capabilities;
- To improve the research capabilities of faculty and students;
- To enhance the LBJ School's ability to serve the public;
- To provide support for a computing infrastructure, telecommunications, and multimedia capabilities that use emerging technological developments appropriately;
- To work with the General Libraries and other campus units to integrate the University's public affairs related computational, information, multi-media, and library resources into a more effective point of access for students, researchers, and the public.

ITAC Funding Source Table

Information Technology Fund Source Summary:	1995/1996	1996/1997	1997/1998
Annual operating allocation (50-account)	\$9,500	\$25,000	\$25,000
Annual special fund (80-account)	\$8,000	(BF) \$16,130	(BF) \$11,333 96/97 awd. \$75,000
Annual college level IT fee		\$35,014	\$44,000

According to the priorities defined in our 1997/1998 Academic Vision Plan, expenditures from both the Information Technology 50-account and 80-account have been dedicated to improving hardware (faster processors, larger hard drives, and more RAM) and improving functionality and availability of multimedia resources for the classroom.

Part 2: College Vision

The LBJ School's Information Technology Committee has set the following five priorities in its 1999/00 Information Technology Vision Plan, each one designed to meet the goals of the School and the University in the area of information technology:

1. Establish an instructional, joint-use computing facility in the Edie and Lew Wasserman Public Affairs Library.
2. Upgrade the Wasserman Media Room to meet contemporary multimedia and communication demands.
3. Upgrade microcomputer hardware (and software) to bring the School's equipment up to the baseline standards articulated in the ACITS recommended hardware list.
4. Enhance classroom access to computer resources by improving equipment on multimedia carts that can be shared among classrooms.
5. Automate software management of the LBJ Student MicroLab.

While the School still struggles to overcome inadequate hardware, we have made progress in the last year in our strategy to raise the information proficiency among students, faculty and staff. Examples of this progress include:

- Replacement of approximately two-thirds of the obsolete hardware located in the LBJ Student MicroLab.
- Paperless academic advising, relying as a policy exclusively on e-mail and web-based information, including mandatory web-based course descriptions.
- Promotion of the use of listserv and web-based syllabus and information dissemination on an optional basis for all courses.
- Continued support of student, faculty, and staff technology skill development tutorials on information technology.
- Periodic offering of introductory web publishing to students, faculty, and staff. Support of the webspinners

group, a special interest group on web publishing, which meets regularly and involves all of the School's constituencies. This group has become an important vehicle for learning new skills as well as a forum for discussing more effective ways of using web publishing to enhance the classroom experience.

- Fostering among all students the expectation that successful policy professionals be competent in computer and information skills, through course assignments as well as requiring on-line resumes for career placement.
- Continued involvement of the School's Information Technology Committee, made up of students, faculty, and staff, has been invaluable in including all members of the LBJ community in technology decisions and planning.

Part 3: Facilities and Staffing

The LBJ School has a 50 seat student MicroLab, 4 seat PhD Lab, and 4 seat Faculty Lab all located in Sid Richardson Hall, Unit 3. The Wasserman Media Room (seating capacity of 35) is capable of rear screen computer projection, teleconferencing, videotape and slide presentation. Additional multimedia resources consist of an LCD projector/ computer located in classroom 3.109 and a portable multimedia cart. Scheduling, maintenance, and management of the School's multimedia resources as well as technical support for all students, faculty, and staff is provided by the LBJ School Computation Center (LBJCC). LBJCC staff consists of three full-time equivalents (Systems Analyst, Information Analyst, MicroComputer Application Specialist) and two half-time Computer Programmer Services Assistants. During the Fall and Spring semesters, MicroLab coverage is supplemented by student lab assistants for a total of 70 hours per week. LBJCC is also responsible for technical support for the Governor's Center for Management Development and the Center for the Study of Human Resources, both located at UT Austin's Lake Austin Center.

Part 4: Proposed Projects

A. Academic Instructional Projects (ITAC Eligible)

Project 1. Establish an instructional, joint-use computing facility in the Edie and Lew Wasserman Public Affairs Library.

We lack a facility for training students, staff, and faculty on the use of hardware, software, and the internet. The Student MicroLab is not designed or set up for instructional purposes, but rather for regular computer use. The LBJ School community has greatly increased its level of literacy in the information technology arena in recent years. The administrative staff, the faculty, and the Wasserman Librarian have organized a number of user groups to share information and knowledge about web use, statistical packages, hypertext markup language, database management, Lexis/Nexis, and more. These sessions have to be scheduled in the Student MicroLab at awkward times to minimize the disruption of on-going student computing. The head of the Wasserman Library has obtained agreement from General Libraries to free up approximately 800 square feet of the Wasserman Library to enable the School and the Library to establish a partitioned Instructional Computing Facility (ICF). The space would be securely partitioned and sound-proofed and would be equipped with 24 workstations for the audience and one workstation for the instructor along with data projection equipment. The ICF would make it possible to provide hands-on interactive training in a wide range of computer-related tools. There is cross-departmental involvement in this project. The audience is students, faculty, and staff from units on the East Campus. Space will be provided by the General Libraries in the Wasserman Public Affairs Library.

Project 1 budget:

Workstations, 25 @ \$2,600.00	\$65,000
Projection equipment including screen (\$2,000), LCD video projector (\$10,000), remote control for projector and mouse and laser pointer (\$300)	\$12,300
Modular partitions to separate lab facility from the rest of the library for noise abatement and security	\$11,000
Furniture: desks (\$9,000), chairs (\$5,000)	\$14,000
Electrical (\$1,500) and data connections (\$2,500)	\$4,000
Project 1 Total	\$106,300

Project 2. Upgrade the Wasserman Media Room to meet contemporary multimedia and communication demands.

Developing a videoconferencing facility within the LBJ School would be enable us to offer our graduate students a window to the policy makers in Washington and around the world. By housing the facility in the LBJ School, we can expand its uses without incurring the repeated logistical problems and expense of seeking facilities elsewhere. We have been handling the demand for this capability by moving to various other distance education facilities on campus and in some cases have been unable to support the room rental fee or to move the class due to scheduling constraints. The LBJ School's Media Room is located in the Wasserman Public Affairs Library. Operated by the School's Computation Center, the room was built in 1986 and seats about 35 people. It is currently used for computer demonstrations, projecting video on a large screen, teleconferencing, or viewing downlinked satellite programming. The room is sound-proofed, has movable lighting fixtures, a projector, phone lines, ethernet connections to both the School's subnet and the Library's subnet, video playback equipment, an audio and video controller, and microphones with wall plugs in both the front and back of the room. There is a camera and front and back wall plugs for video input. The current projector cannot provide the brightness or resolution required for computer presentations. The current cable drop used for viewing downlinked satellite is part of the old campus cable system and requires replacement. Upgrading the systems in the room will not only add functionality, it will enable the room to continue to provide its current functions. There is cross-departmental potential for this project, no additional space is required, and the audience is students, faculty, and staff from units on the East Campus.

Project 2 budget:

Video drivers (carry signal between Media Room and the Network Operations Center (NOC)), 2 @ \$1,750	\$3,500
Fiber between the Media Room and the NOC	\$2,678
Replace existing rear screen projection system	\$10,000
Upgrade computer	\$2,600
Document projection system	\$1,700

Project 2 Total	\$20,478
Recurring cost: Circuit monthly maintenance fee	\$36

Project 3. Upgrade microcomputer hardware (and software) to bring the School's equipment up to the baseline standards articulated in the University's Faculty Computer Initiative.

Like many smaller units on campus, the LBJ School's microcomputer equipment inventory falls significantly below the baseline standards as described by ACITS recommended hardware list. We replaced approximately two-thirds of the hardware in the MicroLab but still need replacements in the Faculty and PhD Labs. Also, out of our 26 regular faculty, 7 still lack computers that meet the minimum hardware standards. The need to bring the School up to recommended standards is a longstanding one, and this present request is a continuation of earlier requests. We also realize that only the instructional technology related computers can be upgraded using ITAC funds.

Project 3 budget:

Computer Location: (est. \$2,600 per machine)	Number to Replace	Cost
Students	20	\$52,000
Faculty	9	\$23,400
Faculty Support Staff	4	\$10,400
Administrative Support Staff	24	\$62,400
Project 3 Total	57	\$148,200

Project 4. Enhance classroom access to computer resources by improving equipment on multimedia carts that can be shared among classrooms.

An increasing number of courses offered by the LBJ School are integrating computers into the instructional curriculum. Despite the permanent installation of computer and LCD data projector in our large classroom, there is still intense competition among the faculty for access to the one functional multimedia cart that is available. We propose to upgrade the second multimedia cart to a functional level. The audience is students, faculty, and staff and no additional space is needed.

Project 4 budget:

portable high-resolution LCD data projection device (1)	\$6,000
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computer with the capability of supporting Macintosh and DOS/Windows software, external audio speakers, CD-ROM drive, zip drive, and audio visual in and out capability, 17" monitor	\$2,600
portable enclosure (movable desk or cart)	\$700
mechanical security for enclosure	\$250
Project 4 Total	\$9,550

Project 5. Automate software management of the LBJ Student MicroLab.

Maintaining a consistent, legal, and virus-free environment in a student computer lab is an abiding problem on all parts of campus especially given the diverse collection of computers in our Student MicroLab. The lab is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and is not proctored. The Lab is secured by an electronic access card system. Each time a student sits down in front of a computer, the computer's software environment has been modified from the baseline or standard environment. The modifications are often not obvious, are cumulative, and usually end up causing the computer to exhibit disconcerting, unexpected behavior or to be completely unusable. Computer use in the lab would be made much more efficient by installing a system that would insure that each time a student sat down to use a computer the environment would be standard. Additional benefits would be less time required to update or modify the software configurations and the virtual eradication of computer viruses. The LBJ School currently maintains the software integrity of its machines by reformatting the hard disk and restoring software from a Zip drive, a labor-intensive process that greatly diminishes the effectiveness of the staff of the School's Computation Center. This request addresses the problem by proposing to purchase a server dedicated to restoring each computer to a standard or baseline configuration at the end of each student's session. The audience is students and no additional space is required.

Project 5 budget:

Pentium based server	\$8,000
Windows NT server software (clients are available under the Microsoft CEA)	\$310
Project 5 Total	\$8,310

B. Administrative / Research Areas (Non-ITAC Eligible)

Our priority for administrative technology is to upgrade 24 computers to baseline standards as described by ACITS recommended hardware list. (See above project 3.) The cost is estimated at \$62,400. A portion of these funds will come from our Special Equipment allocation; however, our annual allocation is only \$15,000, so this equipment will have to be prioritized and upgrades phased in over a period of years.

Our major research unit, the Center for the Study of Human Resources, is self-sustaining, generating its own operating and equipment budget. It would be an advantage for the School to be able to charge them for technical support they use. Currently, the LBJ School Computation Center is responsible for the Center's

technical support and receives no reimbursement. This is true for the Center and all other research activities at the School. If the School could recover technical support costs from research units and contracts, this could be another source of funding for administrative technology.

C. College Instructional Technology Funding Overview

At this time we do not have a clearly articulated college-wide funding strategy or a life cycle methodology. Historically, ITAC funds have been used to support student and instructional computing. Our first computer lab was created from hardware received as the result of a Project Quest grant. The original source of funding for computers purchased for the faculty support staff was three years of accumulated Special Equipment money. Faculty members with adequate funding sources (Chairs, Professorships, Endowments) have been able to purchase hardware as they wished within the recommended standards. Faculty without funding sources have inherited hand-me-down equipment from areas that have been able to afford to upgrade equipment. New faculty coming on board in the last three years have been privileged to participate in the Provost’s Office’s Faculty Computer Initiative. Without this program, they would have received hand-me-down equipment. Initial creation of the Wasserman Media Room was funded by a gift from Edie and Lew Wasserman to the School. Over the last two years some administrative staff computers have been replaced with one-time allocations from the LBJ Foundation. Clearly, we cannot expect to move forward without a comprehensive information technology plan, and it is imperative that this plan recognize the need to incorporate support and maintenance costs as a significant part of the overall technology cost.

Part 5: Appendices

1. Total IT Summary Expenditures 1997/1998

category	19-9709-0050, IT MO&E	19-9709-0080, IT Special Equip.	Wages and Classified	College IT
staff salaries			68,691.00	21,444.00
hardware	1,541.10	57,547.67		
network	709.04	2,971.54		
multimedia hardware	00.00	16,146.00		
software	453.34	00.00		
support	18,802.41	00.00		
maintenance	968.94	3,106.05		
other	16.80	5.12		
Total Exp. 1997/1998	\$22,491.63	\$79,776.38	\$68,691.00	\$21,444.00
			Total All	\$192,403.01

2. College Infrastructure Summary:

Network status, 100% wired (10baseT).

Technology classrooms: SRH 3.109, seating capacity approx. 60, has ceiling mounted LCD data projector and computer; SRH 3.331G (Wasserman Media Room), seating capacity approx. 35, has rear screen projection system for computer output, teleconferencing, videotape, and slide capability.