REQUEST FOR TECHNOLOGY FEE FUNDS

Unit: Department of Sociology

Title of Request: Creation of Departmental Instructional Lab and Update of Departmental Research Lab

Budget Summary of request

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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Services</th>
<th>Salary (GLA)</th>
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Brief Explanation of Request:

The Department of Sociology proposes the creation of an instructional computer laboratory (in GC 1050) and an update to our computer research laboratory (in GC 1056). In 1997, the department was awarded funding for a research lab in order to enhance our graduate students’ training with the technological tools necessary for advanced statistics and research methods. This lab has proven to be a great asset for our department, but now it is somewhat outdated and cannot meet the growing demands placed upon it.

Updating the existing space with new computers and software (nine new computers) to offer specialized instruction to Sociology majors and creating a lab with computers and software (six new computers) to increase the technological sophistication of our undergraduate courses in order to strengthen our department’s ability to provide quality resources as well as individualized attention to our students on both levels.

There are several ways in which departmental undergraduate instruction could be improved with the creation of a new lab. It would increase our students exposure to increasingly important hands-on experience in data analysis. Currently, our required Social Statistics (3010) and Social Research Methods (3020) courses are routinely are unable to reserve classrooms with computer access for each student. This is particularly problematic in the evening hours when these classrooms are in great demand. As a stopgap measure, instructors have used the research lab in its current state for class instruction. During the Fall 1999 semester, 2,343 students were enrolled in Sociology courses which included 241 majors. In Spring 2000, 2,321 students were enrolled in Sociology courses which included 231 majors. However, too few computers are available to meet the demand, and this strategy often prevents “walk-in” users’ access to the lab. By adding a second lab, we will be able to instruct more students at a given time, and “walk-in” students should be able to find an available computer during peak class hours.

The department’s goal of attracting, retaining, and training top quality graduate students will also be greatly augmented by improved computer facilities. On the Master’s level, nine out of twenty-seven hours of coursework (Soci 8940 – Thesis Research and Soci 8999 – Directed Project) will be spent utilizing the facilities while on the Doctoral level, twenty out of sixty-three hours of coursework (Soci 9999 – Dissertation Research) will also be spent using these same facilities doing individualized coursework and having access to the department’s space will enable these students to work directly with their faculty mentors. Also, both master’s and doctoral students are required to take comprehensive examinations which are offered every semester and are administered in the department.
The technological and mentoring support generated by these enhancements will promote more effective instruction and research. In short, these improvements will allow our graduates to more effectively compete in a job market that requires both a successful research agenda and high competency in statistics and methodology. By updating our departmental computer facilities we wish to foster a research-oriented environment in which our students have easy access to quality instruction.

**Ongoing, Unfunded Expense (Answer “NONE” or attach details as necessary):**

- Salary for two GLA II personnel @$26,000 each for next five years
- Replacement of five computers during fourth year – $15,000
- Replacement of five computers during fifth year - $15,500
- Replacement of five computers during sixth year - $16,000
- Software update @$2000 for next five years
- Supplies @$1000 for next five years

Requirements for New Space (Answer “NONE” or attach details as necessary): None

Time Considerations (Answer “NONE” or attach details as necessary): None

### Budget Request

#### EQUIPMENT

- 15 computers - $37,500
- 1 medium volume printer - $2,000
- 1 high volume printer - $3,000

#### SUPPLIES

- Paper, toner cartridges, diskettes, etc $1000
- Software (Both statistical analysis and data based) - $2000

#### SERVICES

- Maintenance - $500 yearly

#### SALARY

- 2 GLA II $26,000