UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA
AT LAFAYETTE

STEP Committee
Technology Fee Application

Video Production Tools in the Visual Resource Center
Title

Charles E. Richard, Assoc. Professor
Name of Submitter
(Faculty or Staff Only)

Moving Image Arts Program
Organization
Title: Video Production Tools in the Visual Resource Center
Date: January 5, 2011
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Department/College/Org: Moving Image Arts Program, College of Liberal Arts

ABSTRACT (250 words or less):

The newly formed Moving Image Arts program proposes an enhancement of the Visual Resource Center by the purchase of
- twenty (20) high definition digital video cameras;
- three (3) light kits;
- three (3) sound kits; and
- the installation of Final Cut Pro video editing software on all of the Center’s computers.

This enhancement will not only serve the needs of the growing number of Moving Image Arts majors, but it will also be available to the student body at large. Located in Fletcher Hall and operated by the College of the Arts, the Visual Resource Center is open to all students.

Since its creation in Fall 2010, the Moving Image Arts program has experienced a much higher rate of growth than anticipated. At present, existing resources for the production and editing of video have proven inadequate to meet the needs of the growing number of students enrolling in the program. Therefore, the proposed enhancement to the Visual Resource Center would allow students in this new program to carry out their coursework.

At the same time, there is an increasing need for video production resources among the general student population. Supplementing more traditional means of communication, video has become a critical part of modern technological literacy, and students need to be able to produce original video segments for projects in classes as far-ranging as folklore and public relations. This enhancement would make available necessary resources for students from across the curriculum.
STEP Proposal: VRC Enhancement--3

PROPOSAL.

A. Purpose of the grant and impact to student body as a whole

The Moving Image Arts program proposes a technology enhancement for the Visual Resource Center (VRC), located in Fletcher Hall and operated by the College of the Arts. Funds from the proposed grant would be used to purchase twenty (20) high definition video cameras and to install Final Cut Pro video editing software on the twenty-one (21) Apple computers in the VRC. Along with the cameras and software, the STEP grant would also purchase three (3) professional-grade light kits, and three (3) professional-grade audio kits. As a result of these enhancements, students will be able to shoot and edit original video for projects associated with their regular coursework. The level of quality associated with the proposed equipment means that student projects would be suitable for publication, whether at academic conferences, public screenings, for viewing on the Internet, broadcast, or any other publishing venue.

As a new program, the Moving Image Arts program has not requested STEP-funded projects prior to this one.

1. Impact to Moving Image Arts majors.

The Moving Image Arts major was approved by the Board of Regents in October 2010. Initial projections for the number of majors in the new program were fifteen (15) for the first year. Even before the start of the program’s first semester, however, more than twenty (20) students have declared Moving Image Arts as their major, and we predict a high number of incoming freshmen in the fall will add many more.

At the current, unforeseen rate of growth, existing resources for the production and editing of video have proven inadequate to meet the needs of students enrolling in the program. Video production is a core component of their coursework.

The proposed enhancement to the Visual Resource Center will make it a lab suited to meet the long-term needs of Moving Image Arts majors. The purchase of cameras and installation of editing software will particularly impact the majors’ introduction to the discipline, “Intro to Moving Image Arts” (MIA 101), providing critical resources for this class. The enhanced lab would serve as a classroom for MIA 101. But the enhancement will also meet the majors’ needs in future classes as well, such as “Single Camera Production and Editing” (CMCN 365), “TV/ Film Producing and Directing” (CMCN 460), “Documentary Filmmaking” (CMCN 465), and the seniors’ “Capstone Project” (MIA 465).

The cameras specified in this proposal are capable of achieving broadcast-quality High Definition images and feature an onboard microphone. For most applications, the cameras by themselves are sufficient for general usage by students in their ordinary coursework. However, from time to time, students may undertake special projects that require professional-grade lighting and sound. This is especially true of majors in Moving
Image Arts, (as well as in Visual Arts, and Communications) whose senior capstone projects are intended to showcase the professional abilities of students ready to enter the job market. For them, the grant would provide three (3) light kits and three (3) audio kits, with the aim of producing professional-quality lighting and sound for special projects, suitable for publication.

Funding this enhancement of the Visual Resource Center will make a crucial difference in the success of this new major. As an interdisciplinary program, Moving Image Arts relies on the resources available to it through the departments and colleges that contribute to the major—resources like the VRC lab. Because of the current budgetary crisis, the Moving Image Arts program receives no funding or equipment allocations from the university, making it especially difficult to launch the new major in these times. Therefore, the assistance provided through the proposed STEP grant would literally make the difference in whether the program will launch successfully, or whether the students will suffer severe compromises at the very start of their education in this field.

2. Impact to other majors.

The Visual Resource Center is open for use by all students, and thus the proposed enhancements would benefit the general student population. Along with Moving Image Arts majors, the VRC is heavily used by students in Visual Arts, Architecture, Communications, and various other majors where video production is a priority.

Students in all disciplines are increasingly in need of access to video production resources. In 2008, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) adopted a new definition of literacy, one that cuts across traditional curricular boundaries to include the interests of the arts, humanities, and sciences. “As society and technology change, so does literacy,” the NCTE writes. “Because technology has increased the intensity and complexity of literate environments, the twenty-first century demands that a literate person possess a wide range of abilities and competencies…”

Included in that wide range is the ability to communicate using video. Students in disciplines as diverse as anthropology, public relations, history, business, and science all experience the occasional need to include video production as part of their research and in the delivery of classroom projects. Just as a student needs to know how to write in order to communicate in his or her chosen field, so too is it becoming increasingly important to use technologies like video, according to the National Council of Teachers of English.

Therefore, in keeping with the goal of promoting technological literacy, the proposed enhancement to the Visual Resource Center is intended to improve students’ access to technology that they can use in their ordinary coursework, regardless of the discipline. Students in folklore, for example, would be able to check out cameras to record and edit samples of local folk culture or traditional music. Likewise, those in history would have the option of producing a short historical documentary as an alternative to the usual
research paper. Science students could record and present their experiments on video. Information is now communicated in a wider variety of forms than ever before, and our students need to have access to the technology that will allow them to keep pace with these changes.

B. Projected lifetime of enhancement

With proper care and maintenance, the cameras purchased by this grant should have a service lifetime of at least five to seven years. The same is true of the lighting and audio kits. This projection is based on our experience in the Cinematic Arts Workshop (an affiliate organization of the Moving Image Arts program), wherein similar equipment purchased in 2003 is still in good working order, despite heavy usage.

As software, the Final Cut Pro program to be installed in the Visual Resource Center would have an unlimited lifespan and could be upgraded if it ever becomes outdated.

In order to ensure the longevity of the requested equipment, any student using it will be required to undertake a tutorial in the proper handling and usage of the gear prior to checking it out. This training will be conducted by the Director of the Visual Resource Center.

C. Person responsible for implementation, installation, maintenance, operation, and training.

The person responsible for the equipment and software proposed for purchase would be Mr. Donny Broussard, the Director of the Visual Resource Center. Mr. Broussard’s experience at the Visual Resource Center qualifies him for installing, maintaining, and operating the resources requested, and his work history includes offering instruction and training to students.

Mr. Broussard’s duties at the VRC include managing the student workers and one full time computer technician. He fixes computer problems, installs software, and maintains systems. He assists students with projects in Final Cut Pro, Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator, as well as Compressor. Along with managing the budget for the Visual Resource Center, he also orders and maintains all the computers and technical equipment for the College of the Arts. He maintains the College’s existing camera equipment and checks cameras out to students. He also teaches a short workshop in camera usage and assists students in transferring their footage from the camera to the computer for editing. Finally, Mr. Broussard has extensive experience with the film industry, editing and managing content for KillerFilm.com film review website, which averages 200,000 unique hits and 475,000 page views. He writes articles for Filmmaking.net, Cinemaadvanced.com, SxSW World, and various other online publications dealing with the film industry.
D. Purpose and justification of each item listed in the Budget Proposal

1. Twenty (20) Canon Vixia HF21 Dual Flash Memory Camcorders @ $499 per unit. Subtotal: $9980
   The Canon Vixia HF21 Dual Flash Memory Camcorder is the best value available in a consumer-grade camera. It records and outputs video at a resolution of 1920 x 1080, which is considered High Definition broadcast quality. This level of resolution would allow students to produce professional-quality video with a camera that is priced at the consumer-level. It also features microphone input ports, which are necessary for achieving good audio. Broadcast-quality video and sound are useful to students who are trying to build a professional portfolio of work, preparing them for the job market, or for those who are presenting their videos at academic conferences or other public screenings. Twenty cameras are needed to outfit an ordinary section of most classes that utilize the VRC, including Intro to Moving Image Arts (MIA 101)

2. Twenty (20) Pearstone Onyx 1020 Digital Camera/Camcorder Shoulder Bags @ $15.95 per unit. Subtotal: $319
   The Pearstone Onyx 1020 Digital Camcorder Shoulder Bag provides safe transport and storage of the Canon Vixia. Transporting and storing the camera in this bag will extend the lifetime of the equipment.

3. Twenty (20) Slik U9000 Tripods @ $49.95 per unit. Subtotal: $999
   The Slik U9000 tripod provides for the stable operation of the Canon Vixia. It allows the user to pan or tilt the camera and features a Quick Release tripod shoe.

4. Three (3) Sennheiser ME66 Shotgun Microphone Basic Kit @ $766.50 per unit. Subtotal: $2299.50
   For most applications, the Canon Vixia’s on-board microphone will suffice. However, some students may require professional-grade sound recording for interviews, dialogue, etc. For this purpose, the Sennheiser ME66 Shotgun Microphone Basic Kit is the best value.

5. Three (3) Hosa Technology XVM-101M Angled 3.5mm to 3-Pin XLR Male Microphone Cable @ 7.99 per unit. Subtotal: $23.97
   The Hosa Technology XVM-101M Angled 3.5mm to 3-Pin XLR Male Microphone Cable allows the Canon Vixia camera to utilize professional-grade microphones.

6. One (1) CL-SFT1 Softbox Kit 3200K @ $245 per unit. Subtotal: $245
   A softbox lighting kit, including light stand, especially useful for conducting interviews.

7. One (1) CL-LED256 LED Spot @ $299 per unit. Subtotal: $299
   A LED spotlight with barndoors, used to backlight subjects in both interview and performance settings.

8. One (1) CL-LED600 LED Panel @ $399 per unit. Subtotal: $399
   A LED light panel with barndoors, used as a key light in both interview and performance settings.
9. Two (2) CL-CS1 Cool Lights C-Stand @ $129 per unit. Subtotal: $258
   A versatile stand to support the CL-LED256 and the CL-LED600 and other equipment.

10. Three (3) CL-CCL1A Portable Fluorescent Fixture Carrying Case @ $199 per unit. Subtotal: $597.
    A durable carrying case for the specified lights, useful for both storage and transport. The cases will protect the lights and extend their lifetime.

11. Three (3) CL20032 Replacement Bulbs @ $79 per unit. Subtotal: $237
    Replacement bulbs for the CL-SFT1 softbox light kit.

12. Six (6) 18” Chinese Lantern China Ball lights @ $5 per unit. Subtotal: $30
    An inexpensive lighting solution for situations that demand only minimal lighting.

13. Twenty-one (21) seats of Final Cut Pro video editing software @ $2198 total.
    A package of twenty-one licenses of Final Cut Pro would outfit each of the computers in the Visual Resource Center with professional video editing software, allowing students to process and edit their audio and video recordings. Final Cut Pro is the industry-standard software for editing video. Students who become proficient in this program will be competitive candidates in the video production job market. This educational package deal of 21 licenses, with one year of upgrades, for $2198 represents a considerable savings over the regular $999 per unit price tag of Final Cut Pro.

Total: $17,884.47
# Budget Proposal

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