

Memorandum

To: University Technology Committee

From: Paul J. Watson, Chair
Psychology Department

Date: September 8, 2006

Subject: Final Report for 2005 Student Technology Fees Project in Holt Hall 302

In 2005, the Department of Psychology requested funds to upgrade the Holt Hall 302 general purpose computer lab. Funds were requested to purchase state-of-the-art computers, a printer, and a “Lupton” podium. The goal of the upgrade was to make the lab more useful and accessible to Psychology majors and students who might need to use the lab.

All of the equipment needed for the upgrade has been purchased. The computers and printer were installed in time for the Spring 2006 semester and have been used continuously since installation. A “pay-for-print” system also has been installed with the printer in the lab, and it works as expected. Pictures of the newly installed equipment appear at the end of this report.

The availability of 24 computers in the lab, when only about 20 were available before, has allowed more students access to computing resources than was previously possible. Because the new computers have LDC displays, they use less energy than did the old computers. The new computers are state-of-the-art, with the ability to write to CDs. All have USB ports allowing students to use the increasingly popular flash memory devices to transfer work to and from the computers. The computers easily run SPSS, the statistical package used in the Psychology 204 lab and required in the Psychology 201 – Introduction to Statistics course. They also support advanced statistical programs such as Sample Power and Amos, programs used in the Psychology graduate program statistics courses. A special departmental evaluation of the Psychology 204 lab conducted last Spring revealed high student approval of the lab and thus of the computing facilities that make the lab possible. For example, on a five-point rating scale ranging from “strongly agree” (5) to “strongly disagree” (1), students offered a mean rating of 4.47 ($SD = 1.44$) to the statement, “The lab was a worthwhile addition to the course.” An average response of 4.42 ($SD = 1.45$) was also given to the statement, “The lab helped me understand the material in the lecture.” Other formal and informal assessments, along with the typically high student use of the Holt 302 facilities, have documented the positive student response to the upgraded facilities.

Our policy has been to allow any student to use the lab at any time. If labs are being conducted, the lab instructors have been told to let students work at unused computers as

long as they do not disrupt the ongoing lab. That policy has been quite successful, and we have had no complaints from students regarding denial of access or from lab instructors regarding student interruptions.

The “pay-for-print” system installed in the lab works as it should. In the past, the department paid for toner and paper for printing, so the lab was a popular place for students who wanted to print sometimes non-essential articles downloaded from the web or other documents. That kind of usage has diminished now that pay is required, but the printer is fairly heavily used and has functioned without any problems.

Although all the required equipment has been purchased, the “Lupton” podium is not yet functional. We expect it to be completed this semester, after which time lab instructors and others teaching in the room will have access to the full functionality of a “Lupton” classroom.

The overall proposal was funded at \$62,000, a total that was requested to allow for the purchase of 24 Dell computers, a printer, and the podium equipment. The Department worked with James Spruill of the University IT staff to secure considerable savings from Dell in the purchase of the 24 computers. In the end, 24 computers were purchased for only \$30,306, and the podium equipment cost \$10,756.56. In addition, the printer included within the proposal was purchased instead through the “pay-for-print” program. The total spent, therefore, was only \$41,062.56, thus resulting in a savings of \$21,137.44. The Psychology Department will now return these unexpended funds to the University.

The Psychology Department would like to express its deep gratitude to the University Technology Committee for funding this project. The Holt Hall 302 upgrades that this grant made possible have clearly benefited not only Psychology majors, but all students of the University.

Holt 302 Left side computers



Holt 302 Right side computers



Holt 302 Podium (Installation not complete)



Holt 302 Printer and pay-to-print computer

