

<b>To:</b>	Deborah Baldwin
<b>Cc:</b>	
<b>From:</b>	Chad Garrett and Sharon Sellars
<b>Date:</b>	November 3, 2005
<b>Subj:</b>	Report on Language Studies Technology Project (Language Lab)

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We're pleased to report the results of our work developing a plan for the renovated Language Lab. You've read the Language Studies Technology Project (LSTP) document that all DISLS faculty members received at the department meeting on September 20. This memo describes the final decision called for in that document. Since that document calls for a choice of the three options that the Dean's Office will fund (main), we will use this memo to describe the department's choice. In addition, we will also explain what the department plans to fund itself using the money being set aside from the Language Lab's budget (additional).

### **Option C Selected\***

The LSTP document offered the department a choice of three approaches to this project. The department, through its Language Lab committee, has selected Option C. This option provides a renovated digital Language Resource Center/Lab (SH205) and two presentation classrooms (SH303 & 301 or 302).

- \* In order to provide technology for the benefit of the largest possible number of students and to distribute instructional technology fairly among all of its languages, the department has decided to commit remaining funds from the Language Lab Account (lab fees) to pay for a third presentation classroom. Thus the project will ultimately provide for a renovated digital Language Lab and three presentation classrooms (SH 301, 302, & 303).

To reach this decision, the committee had a number of informal discussions with faculty, students, and lab assistants. We believe that the department and its students will continue to benefit from a dedicated Language Lab, but the three presentation classrooms will allow technology to enhance the second language education of significantly more students.

### **What the Main Part of the Renovation Will Include**

In selecting Option C, the committee has made some decisions about the details of the final product. The layout of the renovated lab will be a novel approach that enables both collaboration and individual work as needed:

- The room will accommodate 24(?) student workstations. These 24 laptops computers will remain plugged into the power and network ports in the wall, so battery life and wireless capability will not present problems. Each laptop will provide Microsoft Office and the separate Office Proofing Tools.
- A central computer integrated into the teaching station described below will serve as a control console for instructors and lab assistants. In addition to the programs installed on the student workstations, this console will run SynchronEyes, which will create a lab-style instructional station.
- Tables placed in a U-shaped configuration around the perimeter of the room will hold lockable laptop drawers, and students can access the laptop computers by getting a key from the lab assistant. An separate, adjustable table will be provided as an ADA station.
- While the current paneling will remain, it will be painted just like the rest of the walls in the building. We will add small (2' x 3') whiteboards above the tables for every three workstations to encourage collaborative activities.
- Folding tables with casters can be pushed together to create a "conference table" in the center of the room. And because these tables are mobile, they can be stored in a corner of the room to create a large open space in the lab.
- A lounge-like collaboration area will be located in the southwest corner of the room. Here we will provide four comfortable upholstered chairs, hopefully with attached laptop platforms, and a

round coffee table in the center (if possible, the table will provide some storage). This space will allow students to use their personal laptops and access the department's wireless network. Power outlets will also be provided in case a student's laptop needs more "juice." The two doors along the western wall will remain but will be painted like the walls and remain locked and unused.

- In the southeast corner, on the other side of the door from the collaboration area, a long desk will house the presentation station and teaching computer. This desk will also serve as the main lab "console" where lab assistants will do their work. The presentation station will provide a central control for the A/V components (VCR/DVD player, projector, and document camera) and the sound system.
- In the northeast corner will be the locked computer "closet," which will hold computing equipment and provide a space for computer maintenance.
- Between the computer closet and the doorway will be the network color printer on a stand that will hopefully provide storage for paper and toner.
- The manual projection screen will be located against the northern wall above the student workstations.
- The room's lighting will be in two zones. The front (northern) half of the room will be switched separately from the back half. Light switches that control both zones will be placed just inside the two remaining (working) doors.
- A computer-aided language learning system (probably Auralog, with at least the beginning and intermediate modules for all four of the department's languages) will enhance student learning inside and outside the Language Lab.
- Basic presentation stations (projectors, document cameras, VCR/DVD players, and laptop hook-ups) will be installed in 301 and 303.

### **What the Additional Part of the Renovation Will Include**

As mentioned above, the department has committed the remainder of its fees budget to outfitting the third classroom (302) with a presentation station. If funds are left over from that expenditure, we will apply them to additional items we would like to install:

- Large bulletin boards would be used to cover the useless doors on the west wall and would provide space for displaying student work or notices and opportunities.
- A wide screen television could be installed in the collaboration area—coupled with either satellite broadcasts or the foreign language stations provided via cable mentioned above.
- Rugs would add some character, color, and interest to the room and would also mediate some of the sound reverberation caused by the tile floor.

### **Future Plans (What the Renovation Won't Include)**

The committee has a number of other ideas that the Language Lab will implement over time using its budget from fees or the department's maintenance:

- Satellite or cable television subscriptions would allow students to view programs in the languages and from the countries they are studying.
- Additional digital language learning resources like films or videos from native-speaking countries.
- Additional advanced modules for the computer-aided language learning system.

### **Unanswered Questions**

At this time many questions remain unanswered.

- As the furniture and non-technological equipment is subject to bid, we do not have the specifics regarding brands, dimensions, colors, etc. The university has hired an interior designer to plan the common areas so that the furniture will have a uniform look and design throughout Stabler Hall. The department understands that this project will be considered part of the larger Stabler project in terms of painting, flooring, finishes, etc., which means choices will be extremely limited. The department also understands that it does not have the final say in such discussions, but it does

request the opportunity to provide input into the final choices, limited though they may be, before the project is open for the final bid.

- There are also some unanswered questions regarding the configuration of 301 and 302 with respect to placement of permanent presentation equipment. Specifically, Rosalie has requested that the whiteboard and projection screen be moved to the north wall in 301. The committee agreed to get input from the German faculty about the orientation of 302. The department understands, however, that since these requests were made after it signed off on the floors plans, such changes might not be possible at this late date.

The Language Lab Committee (Sharon Sellars, Rosalie Cheatham, Mary Anne Garnett, Sherrie Ray, Leah Wilkinson) has worked closely with Chad Garrett to plan a space that is inviting, attractive and exciting. It is our hope that the design of the language lab space will meet not only our current needs but is flexible enough to expand and incorporate future technology and programs for our students.

We hope you find our decision acceptable. More importantly, though, we hope that you are now as excited as we are about the possibilities this project holds for students, faculty, and the university. Please let us know if you have any questions.