

ARTS COUNCIL ANNUAL FUND  
Grant Request Form  
**Deadline: Friday, February 22, 2008**

**Department or Group:** Department of Drama, University of Virginia  
**Contact Person:** Michael Rasbury  
**Phone:** (434) 982-4542  
**Email:** mr2xk@virginia.edu

**Proposal for Funding**

I request funding from the Arts Council's Annual Fund to complete installation of a new design technology teaching space in our Culbreth Building. This project has already been partially supported by both the Department of Drama through the allocation of a dedicated space and the Equipment Transfer Fund, with \$10,000 financial support. The partial funding provided by ETF monies is enough to support the purchase of iMac computers (the core of each station) and now I seek "matching" funds to complete each station. Although the primary focus of this teaching space is to lead undergraduates through a comprehensive study of sound design, the space ultimately impacts all of our design students and design related courses.

During the past four years, sound design courses have been taught in Wilson Hall, in the only Macintosh-based ITC classroom on grounds. Through support of the Department of Drama, ITC, and the Arts Council, we have been able to transform the Wilson classroom into a more sound design friendly space. However, we are beginning to outgrow its resources. Teaching sound design for the theatre requires that students experience the entire sound design process, from inception of an idea to presentation in the theatre. I have identified four major deficiencies with the Wilson Hall classroom as an effective and functional classroom for sound design instruction: lack of reliable and professional audio recording capabilities; limited sound playback equipment other than headphones; a lack of flexibility for immediately incorporating new advances in equipment and software; *no visibility of the greater theatrical process for the students*. These issues are a result of the current multi-disciplinary use of the Wilson space. Because of this, undergraduates experience only facets of the process, and instruction primarily focuses on creation of ideas rather than on the entire process, including implementation and presentation of those ideas in the theatre. To effectively teach theatre sound design, courses need to be

offered in the theatre building, where ideas can be reviewed in the performance environment. The items requested in this document will interface with existing software and theatre sound equipment and allow us to move these courses to the Culbreth Building.

**Budget** (please show model budget and include funds from other sources)

Please see attached spreadsheet. The total request for funding is for the amount of \$10,000.00. *The first item on the attached spreadsheet (iMac computers) will be purchased with the already acquired \$10,000 from Equipment Transfer Funds.*

**How will this project benefit students?**

Both DRAM 262 (Sound Design) and DRAM 364 (Sound Design: Studio) are positioned to achieve excellence. In order to accomplish this evolution, these courses need to be taught in a dedicated environment of sound technology, which should be located in the Drama building where it can be interfaced with existing theatre sound equipment and performance spaces. The technologies in this request for funding will allow me to take groups of students on a meaningful and instructional journey through the entire process of sound design. Expected outcomes include: improved student artistry, mastery of the entire process, and increased visibility of the entire dramatic experience for the students. A final expected outcome is a greatly enhanced educational process for all of our design students (scenic, costume, lights), as this space will serve as a resource to any designer utilizing computer based technology as a tool.

**Brief report on previous grant:**

The Arts Council's Annual Fund has continually facilitated my work with students at the University of Virginia. The "fund" has been integral to providing improvements to undergraduate teaching in sound within the Wilson environment. DRAM 364 enrollment was increased with support from the Annual Fund through additional software acquisition in 2005. In 2006, the Annual Fund helped to support the purchase of a portable field recorder utilized in teaching sound design. During the last granting cycle, the Arts Council graciously provided support for upgrading our core audio software package to meet the requirements of new computers installed in Wilson by ITC. Because of this ongoing support, the transition from Wilson Hall to the Culbreth Building will be a seamless one, as all previous purchases and upgrades will be integrated into the new teaching space.