Title: Enhancing the Collaborative Learning Space in Marston Science Library

Proposer: Dr. Sara Russell Gonzalez (Physical Science Librarian, saragonz@ufl.edu), Melody Royster (Instruction Coordinator and Agricultural Sciences Librarian, mroyster@ufl.edu)

Sponsoring Organization: George A. Smathers Libraries

Purpose: To redesign the Marston Science Library classroom L308 and the Thompson first floor computer lab, in collaboration with UFIT, into flexible, agile learning spaces that provide increased instructional capability and new study space for students.

L308 Renovation - The third floor classroom, L308, in the Marston Science Library currently holds 22 workstations and an instructor podium with a Smartboard screen. The room is frequently used by classes taught by librarians and other department faculty, however due to its previous history as a copy room, it suffers from poor visibility and lack of workspace for students. Desktops and monitors consume most of the desk space and sightlines are especially poor for students sitting in the rear of the room, including students sitting at the ADA spot on the back row. (see Figure 1)

Figure 1. Current configuration of MSL L308, as viewed from the back of the classroom.

We propose a reimagination of the classroom, by installing large monitors on the walls, AirMedia capability, and slim PC's that allow students to move flexible work tables to meet the needs of their class (see Figure 2). The instructor computer will display content on the front Smartboard and the 4 side large monitors, increasing visibility for all students. The library will be repurposing three of the existing monitors. This proposal requests funding for only one additional monitor.

Students will have a choice to work on their own laptop and, if working as a group, they will be able to display their content using AirMedia to the large monitor, just as students currently do in all MSL study rooms. Each monitor will also be connected to a PC allowing groups to easily work together on class activities or group projects.
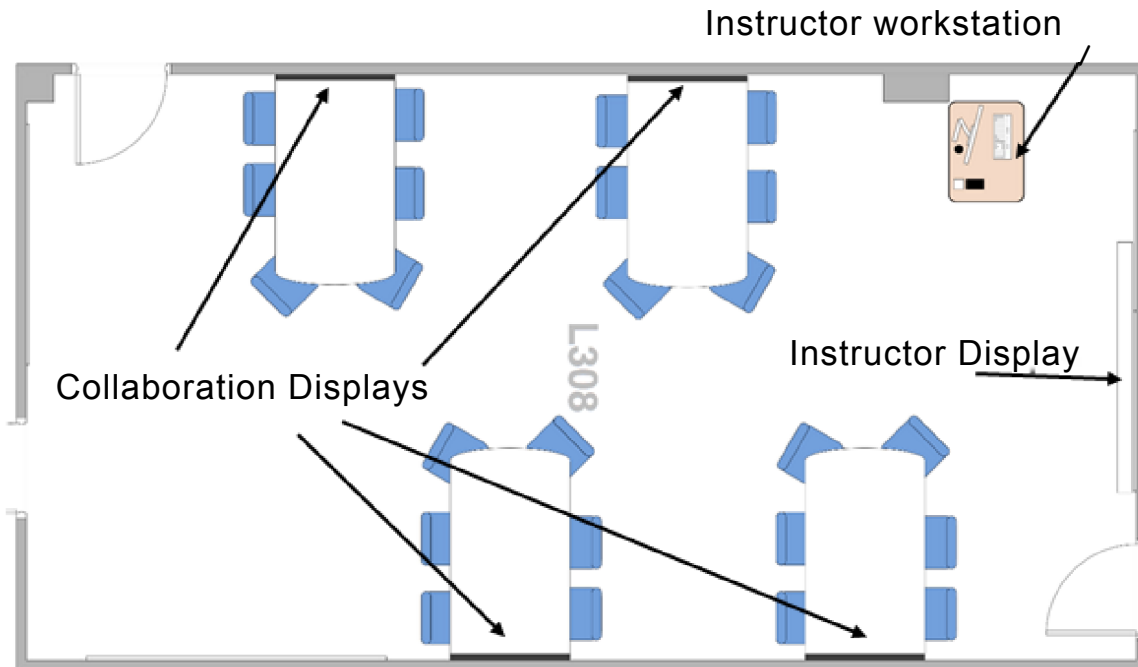

Figure 2. New MSL L308 Layout

When the classroom is not in use after 5pm, the space will be open to students, providing them with another flexible group study option in MSL. The room will also be reservable by student groups for meetings and events- options not currently available. The Libraries will supply furniture that will be modular so tables can be reconfigured for meetings and other activities.

Thompson 1st Floor Computer Lab - To meet the needs of classes that require individual computers or software that is difficult to use on laptops (such as GIS or modeling programs), we are proposing adding instruction technology to the Thompson 1st floor computer lab (see Figure 3). The lab currently holds 30 workstations with large monitors but does not have wall displays or an instructor workstation. It was originally conceived as a potential instruction space and has glass walls that separate it from the main Collaboration Commons area, making it ideal for this transformation. The computer lab would be an increase over the 22 available workstations in L308, so this new space will accommodate more students.

Figure 3. Thompson computer lab on 1st floor of Marston Science Library

This new classroom will have four large display monitors mounted on two of the walls and one of the existing computers will be designated as the instructor workstation to provide projection of content using AirMedia. Similar to other campus computer labs, this space will remain open to students except when scheduled for a class.

Impact/Benefit:

The Marston Science Library is the most visited library on campus, with over 1.4 million users last year. The MSL study rooms and visualization/conference room L136 are constantly booked by students, with study room statistics reporting a 64% usage over all available hours, not including walk-in usage. This is tremendous considering it represents usage during the entire period when MSL is open (24/5 schedule). Student organizations also use the study rooms and the conference room L136 for group meetings.

Currently, L308 is not as well utilized due to its poor configuration and equipment and it has been historically closed to student reservation or open usage. Opening the room to drop-in study or group reservations will benefit directly the large student population that uses MSL. Student groups that regularly use the Marston L136 conference and the visualization room responded to the proposed UF Tech Fee ideas, and describe how they would utilize this newly available space:

"Marston has always been a go-to place for our student groups to meet and we would love to have another technology enabled place to hold events. This new room would be fantastic for events that require group work and use of technology. We would be very excited about the possibilities of hosting Instructional and interactive workshops and possible STEM outreach events in this area. " -Erin Winick

2014-2015 UF SWE President, CEO and Co-Founder Sci Chic

"Marston Science Library is a great meeting space for student organizations, due to its central location and many resources such as the 3D printers, computers, and printers. Similarly, students already congregate in this space for studying, so it is viewed as a well-known community feature. GRIP has been holding its general body meetings in MSL since August 2015, alternating between L136 and L308, hosting over twenty students at each biweekly meeting. The technology, space, and location of L136 is perfect for our meetups and I believe results in greater member turnout due to its proximal location. If the technology of L308 is updated, GRIP and other student organizations would definitely take advantage of the space and library resources available." - Jessica Bergau, 2015-2016 UF GRiP President

"I absolutely adore the Marston Visualization and Conference Room. As Editor in Chief of the UF Honors Program's Magazine, Prism (check us out! ufprism.com), I can say with certainty that this space was integral in revitalizing our flagging magazine. As a workspace, it is unparalleled. Its very structure encourages innovation. The fact that UF allows students to use the innovative technology contained in this room is the first step on the road to national preeminence for our University. By allowing us to use this room, Marston gave us a gift we can never repay. I am grateful to Sara Gonzalez and the entire Marston staff for working so diligently to give us this space. You all rock!" Caroline Nickerson, Editor of PRISM

Sustainability: The technology in MSL 308 and Thompson will be maintained and supported by UFIT and the Libraries.

Timeline: The equipment will be ordered once funding is available in August 2016. Once received, UF Academic Technology will handle the installation. The installation is anticipated to take 6-8 weeks with the goal of having the classrooms available by the end of October 2016.

BUDGET

MSL L308 equipment	Qty	$42,280
Crestron AirMedia Presentation Gateway	5	
Dell OptiPlex 9020	5	
Sharp 60" Display	4	
SMART podium interactive pen display	1	

MSL L308 installation		$7,190
MSL Thompson Computer Lab equipment and installation		$18,832
Crestron Receiver & Room controller	2	
Crestron HD-Extender	2	
Sharp 70" Display	4	
MSL Thompson installation		$2,928
TOTAL		**$71,230**

Budget Narrative:

The budget is comprised of equipment and installation costs for Marston Science Library rooms L308 and the Thompson Computer Lab.

The full budget quotes are located here:

Marston L308 Tech Fee AV Proposal.pdf

Marston Thomson Room Tech Fee AV Proposal.pdf

In MSL L308, the equipment will be comprised of 5 - Dell OptiPlex workstations, connected to 4 - Sharp 60" displays and a SMART podium display located in the front of the room for the instructor. Each of the workstations will have Crestron AirMedia capability so that instructor 1) content can be streamed to the student displays, and 2) students can connect their own laptops. These are the same type of AirMedia stations currently in use in the Marston Science Library study rooms.

In MSL's Thompson Computer Lab, 4 - Sharp 70" displays will be mounted on the walls so that students have a clear view of the instructor content wherever they are sitting. The instructor workstation is not included in the budget because an existing computer in the lab will be designated for instructor use during class sessions. Crestron equipment will allow the instructor workstation to control content displayed on the screens.