Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Devices
College of Education

Project Description:

We propose to purchase and use for instructional activities at FSU Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices. AAC devices assist people with severe communication and other disabilities to participate more fully in school, community, and employment activities; social interactions; and other activities of daily living.

A representative sample of AAC devices will be purchased to include BlueBird II with Picture Master with Picture Master Software and 27 additional devices (See Appendix A for a list of AAC devices to be purchased.). The devices selected are known to be used by individuals in a variety of age ranges who experience different types of disabilities. Devices appropriate for preschoolers, elementary-aged students, middle and high school youth, and adults who have a diversity of communication needs have been selected. These ACC devices can be used with individuals with multiple disabilities, deaf-blindness, hearing impairments, autism, and other disabilities that present challenges in communicating with spoken language.

Students in the on campus special education programs (see below) will be able to use the AAC devices with faculty instruction. A series of video instructional materials will be produced demonstrating the use of the AAC devices. These resources will be used in the distance learning programs identified below.

Impact of the Project on Instruction and/or Learning:

This project has the potential of benefiting multiple teacher education programs as follows:

Visual Disabilities Program. The Visual Disabilities Program prepares teachers to work in public schools and other agencies/programs providing services to children, youth, and adults with visual impairments. Currently, FSU students in the Visual Disabilities program learn about the kinds of ACC systems from which their students/clients might benefit, but are unable to acquire the hands-on experience that they need with these devices to know how to recommend and adapt them for use by individuals who are blind or who have low vision. With the availability of these devices, students can be assigned projects that require they compare features of particular devices, assess the appropriateness of devices for students with particular visual and learning characteristics, and learn how to correctly program and use the equipment. Students in the Visual Disabilities program will benefit from being able to have hands-on learning experiences with AAC devices, as approximately 50-60 percent of students with visual impairments have additional disabilities and experience significant communication challenges. Visual Disabilities Program courses into which use of the AAC devices will be included are EVI 5325: Technology for Individuals with Visual Impairment, EVI 4330: Teaching Students with Visual Im-

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Approximately 10 undergraduate and 10 graduate students are admitted to the on campus Visual Disabilities Program each fall semester. A similar number are admitted to the distance learning programs in Visual Disabilities. Both MS and BS students in the on campus and the distance learning programs would benefit from learning about AAC devices.

**Special Education Programs.** Two Special Education Programs will benefit from the funding of this project:

1. **Education of Students with Exceptionalities Program:** Students in the on campus ESE Program are prepared to teach learners with disabilities in the public school system pre-k through adulthood. Students in the ESE program can use the AAC devices in the proposed project in many ways. They may be introduced to the technology in introductory-level courses, and learn how to actually program and use the devices in courses focused on intervention for learners with autism spectrum disorder and severe disabilities birth through adulthood. Similar to students in the Visual Disabilities Program, students in the ESE Program can complete projects using AAC systems to facilitate peer interactions and engagement in academic classroom learning activities. In addition, the devices were selected for their appropriateness for use across the age span, so can be used in the Early Childhood Special Education and transition to adult life courses.

   Approximately 30 students are admitted to the ESE Program each fall semester and complete both a BS and MS degree. The students could learn about AAC devices in all three years of their participation in the ESE Program. Information about AAC devices will be added to the following ESE Program courses: EEX 4770 Study of Human Exceptionality, EEX 4070: Including Students with Disabilities in the General Education Curriculum, EEX 4253: Functional Reading and Life Skills for Individuals with Disabilities; and EEX 5237: Methods for Teaching Students with Low Incidence Disabilities.

2. **Special Education Studies Program.** The Special Education Studies Program is a MS degree distance learning program. There are currently 25 students enrolled in this program. The videotapes demonstrating use of the AAC devices could be used in the following courses in this program: EEX 5298 Teaching Students with Autism, EMR 5235 Teaching Learners with Severe/Profound Disabilities, and SPA 5432 Autism and Severe Communication Disabilities.

**Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education Programs:** Preservice teachers in these teacher preparation programs take a course focused on the inclusion of learners with disabilities into general education classrooms, EEX 4070: Including Students with Disabilities in the General Education Curriculum. The equipment and materials purchased could be used to introduce them to the technology that would assist in the inclusion process. Approximately 90 students would benefit from this instruction (30 students admitted to the Early Childhood Program each year and 60 to the Elementary Education Program each year).

To summarize, this project will be beneficial for many students in several programs:

- annual number of students: 60 Education of Students with Exceptionalities, 25 Special Education Studies, 60 Elementary Education, 30 Early Childhood Education, 20 Visual Disabilities
- majors: Education of Students with Exceptionalities, Special Education Studies, Visual Disabilities, Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education
- courses affected by this project: EEX 4770, EEX 4070, EEX 4253, EEX 5237, EVI 4330, EVI 5325, EVI 5131, EEX 5237, EEX 5298, EMR 5235, and SPA 5431

**Project Plan:**

Details of project activities, timeline, and participants are outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1. AAC project activities.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Activities</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding granted</td>
<td>Student Technology Fee Advisory Commit-</td>
<td>Mid-December</td>
<td>Funding allocated and made available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ttee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit purchase order for AAC devices</td>
<td>Mary Frances Hanline</td>
<td>By December 20, 2010</td>
<td>PO submitted and accepted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take receipt of AAC devices. Develop written inventory of</td>
<td>Mary Frances Hanline and team</td>
<td>By January 7, 2011</td>
<td>Policies and procedures developed. Equipment is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>devices. Store in Assistive Technology Lab in locked closet.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ready for use and checkout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design checkout and tracking system for AAC devices.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modify syllabi for relevant courses being taught beginning in</td>
<td>Identified faculty</td>
<td>By May 1st, 2011</td>
<td>Syllabi are modified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>summer, 2011, to include instruction on AAC devices. Develop</td>
<td>Mary Frances Hanline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>appropriate assignments. Develop grading rubric for</td>
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<tr>
<td>assignments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete training with Dr. Lasker, including videotaping to</td>
<td>Mary Frances Hanline and Joanne Lasker</td>
<td>By May 1, 2011</td>
<td>Training completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be used in online courses.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete grading of student assignment on use of AAC devices</td>
<td>Faculty teaching identified courses</td>
<td>By June 30, 2011</td>
<td>Grading completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for courses.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Technology Requirements and Expenditures Survey</td>
<td>Mary Frances Hanline and team</td>
<td>By June 30, 2011</td>
<td>Surveys completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete project final report and submit to Student</td>
<td>Mary Frances Hanline and team</td>
<td>By June 30, 2011</td>
<td>Project report completed and submitted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology Fee Advisory Committee</td>
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</table>

Evaluation of graduates’ use of technology with students and clients will be on-going and will inform any modification to the integration of AAC into curriculum.
**Relationship of the Project to Other University Activities:**

FSU’s vision is to become an institution “devoted to transforming the lives of our students, shaping the future of our state and society” (FSU, 2009, p. 7 [http://fsuspc.fsu.edu/media/FSU-Strategic-Plan_2008-09-2013-14.pdf](http://fsuspc.fsu.edu/media/FSU-Strategic-Plan_2008-09-2013-14.pdf)). Enabling people with disabilities to become productive members of the society is one of the potential outcomes we hope to achieve by educating our students with new technologies. One of the FSU strategic priorities is recruiting and graduating outstanding and diverse students. It was reported through our student satisfaction and exit surveys that availability of appropriate and innovative technologies is one of the factors that contribute to their program selection, enriched learning experiences, timely graduation, and further professional success. Thus, this project is aligned with FSU strategic planning initiatives and priorities.

**Estimate of On-going Support:**

Drs. Lewis, McKenzie, and Hanline have been successful in obtaining U.S. Department of Education Personnel Preparation grants. These grants provide students in the Visual Disabilities and ESE Program with fee waivers and stipends to complete the teacher preparation programs. Resources to keep the AAC devices current can be added to future grant budgets. In addition, the faculty are committed to using their personal SRAD monies for the same purpose; and attempts to secure additional outside funds will be made.

*Estimated cost*, budget justification and, cost breakdown are presented here and enclosed as a separate file.

- $16,750.79 AAC devices listed in Appendix A
- $1,675.08 10% shipping and handling
- $602.10 $500 salary for training (Dr. J. Lasker) plus 20.42% fringe
- $19,027.97 total

**Project Team:**

The project team is composed of faculty in the Visual Disabilities and Special Education Programs. Their combined expertise and experience assure successful completion of the proposed project. Brief biographies are provided for each below.

**Dr. Mary Frances Hanline**, Professor in the School of Teacher Education, has over 20 years of experience with university teaching and research in early childhood special education (ECSE). She coordinates the on line Special Education Studies MS program. She has directed/co-directed numerous U.S. Department of Education personnel preparation, projects of national significance, model demonstration, and research grants. Research interests include play-based intervention, inclusion, and the provision of supports to young learners with severe disabilities in high quality inclusive early childhood programs. Her interest in severe disabilities includes an interest in facilitating the communication development of young children with severe disabilities. AAC devices are often used for this purpose.

**Dr. Sandra Lewis** is a Professor in the School of Teacher Education. She currently coordinates the Visual Disabilities Program at FSU and conducts research in the status and efficacy of educational services to students who are blind or who have low vision, including those services that best prepare children for successful transition to adulthood. Over the past 17 years, she has
been the Principal Investigator of several personnel preparation grants, funded by the U.S. Office of Special Education Projects, the U.S. Rehabilitation Services Administration, and the Florida Department of Education. Providing instruction in the independent access to electronic text is a critical role of specialists who work with people with visual impairment. Consequently, teaching the use of a variety of mainstream and access technology, including ACC devices for students with severe disabilities, is embedded throughout the curriculum that prepares these specialists.

**Mr. Mickey Damelio** has extensive experience teaching assistive technology to individuals with visual disabilities of all ages. He currently coordinates the orientation and mobility specialization within the Visual Disabilities Program at Florida State University and in that capacity, teaches the assistive technology class for FSU students preparing to provide services to adults and children with visual impairments. Additionally, Mr. Damelio works part time as a teacher of students with visual impairments and an orientation and mobility instructor for Leon County Schools (LCS). In 2008, LCS honored him as one of their teachers of the year, primarily for his work at Gretchen Everhart School, at which many students with multiple disabilities, including communication disorders and visual impairments, are educated.

**Dr. Amy R. McKenzie** is an Assistant Professor in the Program on Visual Disabilities since 2005. She has worked as a Teacher of Student with Visual Impairments and a Deafblind Specialist prior to working at the university level. She currently serves on national and state committees in the field of visual impairment and deafblindness. Dr. McKenzie teaches a variety of courses at FSU in the area of teaching students with visual impairment on topics such as accommodations for academic students with visual impairments, social and career education, Nemeth Code, educational management for teachers of students with visual impairments, and deafblindness. Her research interests include the development of communication and literacy skills in students with visual impairments and deafblindness, the use of paraprofessionals, and teacher preparation.

**Dr. JoAnne Lasker** is an Associate Professor in the School of Communication Disorders and Sciences and is a licensed speech/language pathologist. She specializes in AAC systems and intervention for individuals with neurological disorders in her teaching and in her teaching. Dr. Lasker’s research interests align with her role in this proposal, as her research interests center around attitudes toward AAC, implementation of AAC strategies with adults who have acquired neurological disorders, and functional intervention approaches for people with severe communication problems.
Appendix A

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Systems

Partner/Plus $88.00

Personal Talker $70.00

Smart/Speak $985.00

Tech/Scan 8 Plus $1,400.00

Sequencer $159.00

SmartPockets $800.00

Talking Photo Album $29.00

Tech/Talk with Environmental Controls $965.00

GoTalk One Now: $10.80

TalkBook Four $69.00

SuperTalker $359.00

GoTalk Pocket $199.00
GoTalk 20+ $249.00

ExpressONE $69.00

Partner One/Stepper $165.00

Smart/128 $1,185.00

IntelliKeys $510.00

GoTalk Button $59.00

Boardmaker Building Blocks for Reading $49.00

Boardmaker Building Blocks for Math $49.00

Randomizer $144.00

Boardmaker with Speaking Dynamically Pro v.6 $865.00

Big Red Red Switch $59.99

ChatBox 40-XT $1,195.00

BlueBird II with Picture Master with Picture Master Software $5900.00

Picture Plate Switch with USB $98.00

Tech/Scan 32 $1,020.00
### Student Technology Fee Budget Template for Project Funding Proposal

**Project Title:** Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Devices

**Organization or College:** College of Education

**Department or Unit:** School of Teacher Education

**Project Period**
- **Start Date:** 12/15/2010
- **End Date:** 5/31/2011

## I. Senior/Key Personnel

List senior and / or key personnel whose compensation will be funded through project non-recurring funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Middle Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Project Role</th>
<th>Requested Salary</th>
<th>Fringe Benefits</th>
<th>Funds Requested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Lasker</td>
<td></td>
<td>Joanne</td>
<td>Trainer</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>102.1</td>
<td>$602.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td></td>
<td>C.</td>
<td>D.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Funds Requested for Senior/Key Personnel**

$602.10

## II. Student & Other Personnel

### Requested
- **Salary**
- **Fringe Benefits**
- **FTE**
- **Funds Requested**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Funds Requested for Students &amp; Other Personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$602.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Salaries, Wages & Benefits**

$602.10
### Student Technology Fee Budget Template for Project Funding Proposal

#### III. Equipment

List items and dollar amounts for each item, including software, (or multiple items of the same type with a total cost of) over $2,000 - add lines as needed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Funds Requested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. BlueBird II with Picture Master with Picture Master Software (See attached Appendix A)</td>
<td>$5,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total for items over $2,000**

$5,900

**Total for Additional items (less that $2,000 each)**

$10,850.79

**Total Equipment Costs**

$16,750.79

**Other costs: 10% shipping and handling**

$1,675.08

**Total for Others Costs**

$1,675.08

**Total Project Cost**

$19,027.97