

UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON**

LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

One Time Funding Request

2009-2010

**Learning Support Services
One Time Request—FY 10**

The mission of Learning Support Services (LSS) at the University of Houston is to increase graduation and retention rates by helping students learn how to learn. We offer learning support programs and self-development activities designed to increase student performance in learning and improve student retention. Individualized learning plans as well as group intervention programs are available. All services are free to currently enrolled students. The primary services offered by LSS include tutoring (provided by our College Reading and Learning Association certified tutors), Learning Strategies Counseling (including assessment), Learning Strategies workshops (for both undergraduate and graduate students), and our multi-media support lab which includes interactive computer learning programs. LSS is open to all students, and we therefore serve those who are in good standing, trying to maintain a high GPA, as well as those encountering difficulties, who may be at-risk for non-retention or graduation. In an effort to maximize student learning, we have moved toward a greater integration of technology to supplement the learning process.

Often tutors can better assist a student after the student finishes a tutoring session, and then works some practice problems on what has been learned. Additionally, students, on an independent basis, can use computer based resources we have acquired to supplement the tutoring experience. We have ordered all the current practice tests for standardized tests such as GRE, GMAT, and LSAT. We installed software to aid our computer science tutors in working with their tutees. We acquired Minitab for our business students to use while being tutored. These new resources are in addition to the software that we already had for assisting in the various courses such as physics and chemistry. We have also installed several learning support programs into our new computers in the media lab, including a reading program called Ace Reader. We began collaboration with Counseling and Psychological Services to provide computerized rehabilitation for students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). This program is entitled Brain Train and is currently used by students referred from CAPS who have been tested as having ADHD. We have installed a computer interactive program called Speak English to one of our computers. This is a program that allows English-as-a second-language learners to practice speaking English and receive feedback on such things as pronunciation. Finally, we have increased our supplemental tutoring option by providing online tutoring in math, and beginning this spring in other subjects as well. This requires a tutor have access to a separate computer during the online tutoring hours.

Four years ago, our computer lab was updated with three faster, more responsive machines; however these are our only student computers and three are insufficient to meet the high demand. The computers are heavily used, even though use is focused only on learning support. Use of the computers in our multi-media center is high. In FY09, we had approximately 1,000 individual contacts on these three computers were documented and a high contacts are being documented for this year. The current math tutor uses a computer for 10 hours per week in order to make online tutoring available as a supplement to face to face tutoring. As noted, the computers are only used for learning support and use is limited to 30 minute intervals to maximize availability to more students and to encourage students to use our programs as a supplemental component to learning. We are requesting a one time request to cover the cost of purchasing five additional computers for our multi-media lab.

Unit cost:	\$6,000
Admin. Charge	\$ 306
Total Request	\$6,306