

Ferris State University
Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant Application

I. Identification

Name of Primary Applicant: Julie Rudolph
Members of Team: Kim Dickman, Marie Yowitz
Department or Unit: Educational Counseling & Disabilities Services
Campus Address: Starr 313
Telephone: ext. 5039
E-mail address: rudolpj1@ferris.edu

II. Event Title (25 words or less)

Mobile Assistive Technology Program

III. Specific core value, strategic initiative, or goal related to diversity that the event will address. (See the University Strategic Plan and the Diversity Plan)

Core Values: Collaboration, diversity, ethical community, excellence, learning, and opportunity

FSU Strategic Goals Initiatives: 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3, 5.5, 6.2

FSU Diversity Plan: 1. Create a University that is welcoming to diverse populations.

2. Recruit, retain, and graduate a diverse student population.

4. Create environments for student learning that are inclusive of and sensitive to a diverse student population.

The purpose of this program is to provide access to assistive technology for people with disabilities in a way that is more convenient to the student than what is currently offered. This assistive technology is used for academic purposes. This will create an environment that is more welcoming to students with disabilities by being sensitive to their specific learning needs.

IV. Abstract (150-200 word, use additional paper if necessary). If the application is approved the abstract will be posted on the Diversity and Inclusion Office website.

The Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services Department will expand and enhance the Department's Assistive Technology to further address the needs of students with disabilities enrolled at Ferris State University. The intent is to enhance a mobile, accessible library of hardware, software, and adaptive devices that will be used by students. A goal is to contribute substantially to ensure that diversity, in its many forms, is understood, respected and valued. This additional technology will assist students with mild to moderate disabilities by increasing utilization of assistive technology (AT) and provide equal access to information. AT can assist people with disabilities in accessing computers or other information technologies and function more independently. Accessible instructional software (on disks, CDs or other media) and documentation allow students with disabilities to participate side-by-side with their peers in computer labs and classrooms as they complete assignments; collaborate with peers; create and view presentations, documents, spreadsheets; and actively participate in simulations and all other academic activities. One on one training will be done with the students who check out this equipment and an interview will be conducted at the end of the semester to assess the success of this program.

V. Event Narrative (up to 4 pages single-spaced)

a. The conceptual framework that explains how the event will augment Ferris's long-

- term commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- b. The goals and intended outcome(s) of the event.
 - c. A statement on how the event relates to the curriculum or a specific discipline, if appropriate.
 - d. A timeline.
 - e. Description of the target audience, including the estimated number of participants.
 - f. The expected impact that the event will have on Ferris.
 - g. A specific plan to assess the impact of the event on the University.

Students with disabilities face a number of academic hardships in college. Assistive technology has come a long way in leveling the playing field for these students. The Assistive Technology Lab (ATL) located in FLITE 119 has some of this technology available for students. The technology available in the ATL include JAWS, a screenreading software for the blind and people with a visual impairment, Kurzweil, a screenreading software for people with a learning disability, Zoomtext, a magnification software for those with a visual impairment, the Magnasight, a magnification machine that can be used with hard copies of documents, Dragon Naturally Speaking, a speech to text software for those who may have difficulty typing, a Braille printer, and Duxbury Braille printing software. Despite the availability of the software already available on campus, the ALT is underutilized. Currently 62 students are eligible to use the technology available in the ALT. Despite efforts to support the use of the room, a very small percentage of those students take advantage of the ALT. It has been speculated that one reason for the underutilization is the fact that the software is confined to a specific place on campus. Students may find this inconvenient or feel embarrassed to check out the key to the ALT. ECDS would like implement a program that gives the student access to assistive technology that is convenient to the student.

There are a number of accessibility features available on the iPad. Voice Over is an accessibility feature that can be turned on through Settings. This feature performs the same function as JAWS, making the iPad accessible to the blind. Dragon Dictate is a free application which allows a person to speak commands, emails, and notes. Natural Reader is also a free application. This is a screenreader comparable to the Kurzweil. ECDS would like to purchase three iPads that could be loaned to students on a semester basis. This would eliminate the need to come to a specific location to access this technology. The fact all assistive technology is centrally located in one room may create a stigma and contribute to the lack of students using this technology. Giving students the opportunity to check out equipment as an alternative to requiring them to use a specific location may create a sense of more independence and equality with other students.

The Smart Pen is another tool that may allow a student to feel more independent and less stigmatized. Currently 83 students are eligible to use a volunteer note-taker in the classroom. The volunteer note-taker is another student in the class who shares notes with the student. The student has the option of remaining anonymous and using ECDS as intermediary to receive notes, but she is still dependent on another person to receive this accommodation. ECDS currently has a few Smart Pens available for students to check out on a semester basis. The Smart Pen records lecture and sinks the recording with the student's notes by using Livescribe Dot Paper. This allows the student to take minimal notes and still be able to capture all of the information given in lecture. Due to the popularity of the Smart Pen, ECDS would like to add four more pen to the current number of eight for a total of 12 Smart Pens available to check out.

The goal of this program is to provide access to technology that will improve the academic performance of students with disabilities and thus increase their grades. An individual interview will be

conducted with each student and grades will be recorded. Students will sign a waiver when checking out the equipment which holds them liable for any lost, stolen, or damaged equipment. ECDS will also ask for consent in using grades as a measurement of outcome.

ECDS would like to begin this program in the fall 2014 semester. Five students will be chosen to check out the iPads based on need and timeliness of request for services. Up to twelve students will be selected to check out the Smart Pens based on the same criteria. These students will be called in for the individual interview during the first three weeks of the spring 2015 semester. A final report will be completed by February 15.

VI. Budget

Budget	Est. Expenses (USD)
Apple® - iPad® 2 with Wi-Fi - 16GB – Black @ 5 x \$399.99	1,999.95
2 gb Sky Smart pen by livescribe @ 4 x \$170.00	680.00
2 gb Echo Smart pen by livescribe @ 5 x \$120.00	600.00
Supplies (i.e. Ink cartridge, Livescribe Dot Paper Notebook)	100.00
Total	3379.95

VII. Final Report

A final report is required and it will appear on the Diversity Office's website. That report is due no later than three months after the funded activity. The final report should address:

- a: A self-evaluation
- b: Results of the event assessment
- c: Attendance figures
- d: Final budget

Applicants' Signatures:



Submission Date: 1/30/14

Submit applications to Patty Terryn, Diversity and Inclusion Office, CSS 312. Review of applications will begin upon receipt and continue contingent on available funds. At the committee's discretion, applicants may be asked to participate in a brief interview to better explain their proposal.