September 1, 2009

To: James V. Maher, Provost

From: Ronald L. Larsen, Dean
         School of Information Sciences

Subject: Supplemental Funding Request

Thank you for the opportunity to request one-time supplemental funding to accelerate progress on high priority components of the School's strategic plan. The University has identified an institutional goal of "offer[ing] superior graduate programs." The School of Information Sciences' 2009-10 strategic plan (the relevant section is excerpted below) explicitly maps this institutional goal to the School's goal of "foster[ing] intellectual vitality for our community." A key objective to reach this SIS goal is to "reconceptualize the role of computer labs and shared learning spaces," where the measurement is "development and funding plans for existing space" and the evaluation and outcome reads "… $550,000 of the estimated $980,000 needed has been identified. However, funding challenges remain."

Institutional Goal: Offer superior graduate programs			
School Goals	Objectives and Strategies	Measurements	Evaluations and Outcomes
Foster intellectual vitality for our community	Reconceptualize the role of computer labs and shared learning spaces	Development and funding plans for existing space	Ongoing discussions with architects; with the Provost's support, $550,000 of the estimated $980,000 needed has been identified. However, funding challenges remain

The $550,000 we have allocated to this project has enabled us to engage Facilities Management architects to redesign the 8th floor computer laboratories in the IS building to support more up-to-date learning labs and to renovate the basic physical infrastructure supporting such use. This includes upgrading the power and HVAC facilities on that floor, but stops short of actually equipping the space for use by faculty and students, pending acquisition of additional resources.

With this memo, I am requesting a supplemental budget augmentation of $150,000 to equip the 8th floor learning spaces with audio/video recording capabilities. With these resources, SIS will collaborate with Facilities engineers to design and install an enhanced multimedia recording system to support on-campus and online (distance) education.

 The installation we anticipate will include several remotely controllable HD video cameras and a distributed audio recording ability. In addition, this increment of funding would enable the School to install appropriate environmental lighting and furniture suitable for delivering an enhanced educational experience to both local and distant students. We believe that the ability to mix multiple video and audio input streams into an integrated presentation environment while facilitating the recording of faculty/student interactions will make this learning space an essential resource in our sustained effort to develop and measure effective learning outcomes.

While this increment of funding will not complete the project, it will go a long way toward accelerating its completion, and will move the project beyond barren infrastructure to usable learning space.