W UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON TACOMA

Student Technology Fee Committee (STFC)
Annual Allocation Request

ALLOCATION REQUEST DATE INFORMATION

Date Created: 2020-02-24 14:13:42	Date Due: 2020-02-28 17:00:00	Date Submitted: 2020-02-26 10:40:10

ALLOCATION REQUEST TITLE/DESCRIPTION

Request Title: Mailchimp Subscription for Husky 411 and ASUWT updates

Request Description: This is a request for funding to subscribe to Mailchimp, an email newsletter service that powers Student Life's weekly Husky 411 emails to students, and now ASUWT's newsletter.

ALLOCATION REQUEST INFORMATION

Department Name: Student Life

Contact Names: Daniel Nash

UWT Email Address: nashd@uw.edu

Title of Request: Mailchimp Subscription for Husky 411 and ASUWT newsletter

Request Code: 20A0220

UW Tacoma Affiliation: Staff

Phone Number: 2536924813

Type of Request: Continuous / Ongoing

Department Head Approval: ✔   Department Head: Bernard Anderson

Annual Request Information

1. Background: Review and discuss the context of the proposed technology in detail. Explain how this proposal will be used in conjunction with an original proposal or existing technology. If applicable, how is the current technology disabled or inadequate?

We are requesting continued funds to pay for our subscription to MailChimp, a service that allows for the easy design of email newsletters and the maintenance of subscriber lists. The Center for Student Involvement primarily uses MailChimp in conjunction with an advertising services form on DawgDen 2.0 to design and distribute Husky 411, a weekly list of events, programs, and opportunities submitted by Registered Student Organizations and campus departments. We use MailChimp regularly, but less frequently, for other informational announcements such as quarterly Welcome Days events, Finals Reminders from the AVC for Student Life, and the dining and tri-campus climate surveys that went out in Autumn Quarter. Beginning in mid-Winter Quarter 2020, we've allowed the Outreach Coordinator of the Associated Students of the University of Washington Tacoma to use the MailChimp account for student government's own newsletter and PrezLine, so that they can analyze their open and click rates.

MailChimp has an easy-to-use design interface in which to create and save customized templates. The service also records data about our email campaigns--how many of our subscribers open Husky 411. We are now able to access a great deal of information about our subscribers and gain assessment data on the number of people reading Husky 411, when they read it, and what links they may have clicked on. This will give us opportunities to continuously customize the experience for our readers. Their analytical program provides us with recommendations on how to improve our mailings, including tracking the best time of day to send our emails to optimize the number of people who open our emails. We believe that having this subscription has, and will continue to, strengthen the power of the biggest information-sharing listserv on the UW Tacoma campus. Increasing student enrollment means more events and programs offered, and more people interested in becoming involved. We want to be able to provide them with information as possible in an easy-to-access manner.

2. Benefit to Students: Discuss how students have benefited from the original proposal, if applicable. How will additional funding of the technology benefit students? If this was an unforeseen technology need, discuss how students will benefit from this new proposal and why the need cannot wait for annual allocation funding.

MailChimp provides a number of advantages over a homegrown university listserv. The service allows for reader-friendly designs that adjust to the device used to access the newsletter; "one-stop shopping" for students to learn about involvement opportunities on campus, and easy unsubscribe options for students who do not wish to receive the newsletter.

The MailChimp service allows easy access to the Husky 411 newsletter, with a design that adjusts to whether a student accesses the newsletter on a desktop, laptop, or smartphone. MailChimp has a mobile version of the newsletter, making it easy to scroll through and add dates to their phone's calendar. By utilizing designs that adjust to users' devices, Husky 411 penetrates a larger market of readers and raises the profile of student groups and administrative departments who use the newsletter to inform students about programs and opportunities on campus. It is crucial that this newsletter be available on all devices to increase student involvement.

We are conscious of the principle that students should be able to *choose* whether they wish to receive emails about campus events or not. MailChimp allows the student to easily unsubscribe if they wish, putting the student in control of their email subscriptions (in Winter Quarter 2020, only 63 of 5,226 contacts opted to unsubscribe from Husky 411).

We have received positive feedback from readers, saying that the format is visually pleasing and easier to read. It was also used as an example of "best practice" by an IT group on the Seattle campus who did a tri-campus survey on how students receive information about campus happenings.

3. Access: Describe who will be using or will have access to the resources being proposed. If the access has changed since an original proposal, be sure to note that here. In addition, all previous requestors, please provide historic data highlighting the usage and accessibility of technology. All new requestors, please provide user need data.

The RSO Marketing Assistant in the Center for Student Involvement will have access to the resources. Because MailChimp is an online service, other department staff can access the service and templates to make appropriate changes if needed. The emails themselves are sent to all students on campus; we update the listserv every quarter with a list provided by the Registrar's office of currently enrolled students.

Our average open rate so far this academic year has been 31.65% for our regular Husky 411 newsletters and the one ASUWT newsletter that has been emailed thus far; this consistently exceeds the industry average open rate of just 16.92%. Open rates vary from 11.9% at the lowest, and 55.5% at the highest. Anecdotally, I've noticed that open rates fluctuate in rhythm with the academic quarter: they are highest during week one, and maybe week two, as students are looking ahead; then they drop as classwork becomes more serious; then rise again, then drop again in time for midterms. Open rates stabilize around the average for the remainder of the quarter.

ASUWT has only released one newsletter so far, which enjoyed a 36.1% open rate. Our less regular email notifications, including finals reminders and survey notices, have all had open rates in excess of 40%--possibly because the subject lines include express or implied calls to action, and not just the promise of information.

4. Timeline: Provide a timeline showing how the proposed technology can be completed during the requested period. Describe when you would like to see this proposal initiated and completed, and why.

The MailChimp subscription is paid on a monthly basis, so if our request is approved for another year, implementation will be seamless.

5. Resources/Budget: Discuss available financial, personnel and space resources devoted to the proposed technology and level of support. Proposal must detail all the items/resources requested to be purchased. This includes filling out the Item Detail in next section.

The Center for Student Involvement employs a Student Marketing Assistant each year, whose responsibilities include managing the Husky 411 newsletter. This assistant and the professional-staff student media specialist are the current primary users of the MailChimp account and would continue to be so. The assistant is allocated workspace in the Center for Student Involvement to complete this work and access the service online. **We are requesting $828.80 for the 2020-2021 Academic Year, covering 10 months of MailChimp service.**

This is an increase over our request for the 2019-2020 academic year, and reflects MailChimp price increases based on the company's rate and the number of student subscribers on our list. MailChimp's pricing is based entirely on audience size, and the inclusion of ASUWT newsletters and other uses as detailed in the answer to Question 1 incur no extra cost.

In September 2019, MailChimp increased its prices for all subscriber tiers by $10/month. The monthly subscription rate for our current tier, 5,000-5,200 students, is $64.99/month ($71.62 with tax included).

The newsletter currently has *just* below 5,200 students subscribed to Husky 411 (in fact, the subscriber amount exceeded 5,200 for one month, temporarily increasing our subscription cost before a small handful of students unsubscribed and dropped us back into our current tier). Knowing this, it would be reasonable to prepare for our subscriber tier to exceed 5,200 in the 2020-2021 academic year, placing us in the 5,200-5,600 subscriber monthly rate of $74.99/month ($82.88/month with tax included).

We are able to pause our account in July and August, allowing us to avoid charges during the summer months when Husky 411 is not in service. For this reason, we only request funds for 10 months of MailChimp service.

Funding Request Items

Item	QTY	Cost Per Item	Shipping Fee	Tax Per Item	Subtotal
Mailchimp monthly subscription	10	$74.99	$0.00	$7.89	$828.80
				OVERALL TOTAL:	$828.80