Medical Sciences Building Web Conference Expansion Proposal

Subject

Outfit the seventeen "S-100" learning spaces on the main floor of the Medical Sciences Building with Cisco/Zoom compatible video conferencing infrastructure

Rationale

The need for small to medium sized groups to meet and virtually collaborate with all UCSF locations has grown exponentially over the past two years. Dedicated, in-room web conferencing systems will allow room users of these spaces to easily connect to all UCSF communication platforms allowing for seamless two-way, interactive communication among the numerous UCSF campuses. Additionally, these dedicated systems allow the full flexibility of connecting to many other web conferencing platforms that could be potentially used by non-UCSF organizations. The rooms identified are located on the main floor of the Medical Sciences Building, a very heavy foot traffic area centrally located for both academic and medical center usage. In addition to academic uses, the close proximity of these rooms to the medical center could allow students, faculty and clinicians to participate in activities such as grand rounds, tumor boards, and case studies in an efficient manner.

These spaces, which consist of eleven 25 person and six 8 person rooms, have flexible furniture which is a rarity for web conferencing spaces on the Parnassus Heights campus. Web conferencing space needed to support up to 25 people at the Parnassus Heights campus is in very high demand. The flexible tables and chairs allow for many variations of room setup. Whether it be a meeting, lecture/presentation, or the "flipped" classroom active learning model, this upgrade will allow any group to connect with students/faulty and staff who may be at another campus, on externship, a partner location (ie: CHO) or telecommuting.

A main technical element of web conferencing, and key to a successful web meeting is high quality audio. Dedicated room systems include balanced microphones and speakers which are able to both pickup and project audio without the hinderance of feedback issues, which are prone when using ad hoc equipment such as laptop microphones and computer speakers. These audio systems devices also include features such as echo cancelation and automatic volume control. Installed video cameras with pan and zoom capabilities will offer participants multiple camera angles offering the participants an enhanced viewing experience.

The costs for the purchase and installation of web conferencing equipment is much lower than ever before and UCSF's agreements with approved vendors and negotiated contracts allow for even lower costs. The dedicated sytems allow for less software related issues, allowing a streamlined, consistent interface for users coming from other locations.

Another plus is having the peace of mind that technical support can be administered in a timely manner. ETS technicians would have access to all of the systems "back ends" allowing for efficient remote troubleshooting and support.

Space Needed

The spaces are already scheduled, managed and maintained by ETS. No space will be removed from general assignment usage except for the installation and testing of the systems.

Collaborating Groups

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Working with campus IT to secure connection to our infrastructure is a repeat task we are familiar with expediting.

Support for the plan

The desire for more Video Conferencing rooms is one of the highest requests we receive. Often the battle for mid sized rooms for free flowing meetings is difficult. The growth of zoom and room connectivity for simple, quick use, is always there. ETS will provide training, support, and maintenance for the units on going.

Ease of transition for current users

The room systems would be updated with touch panels for control of the video conferencing unit and would be very similar to the rooms others use across other UC campuses.