

November 28, 2001

**TO: Rick Fairbanks,
Associate Dean for Humanities**

**FROM: Language Laboratory Faculty Advisory
Committee (LLFAC); Maggie Broner, Chair
Jolene Barjasteh, Dick Bodman, Mary Cisar,
Phyllis Larson, Anne Sabo, Vern Rippley, Irene Walter**

**RE: PROPOSAL FOR WORLD LANGUAGES
LABORATORY SPACE**

**I. MISSION AND GOALS OF THE ST. OLAF COLLEGE WORLD
LANGUAGES LABORATORY (WLL)**

Members of the St. Olaf College community embrace wholeheartedly the incorporation of a global perspective as an integral part of a liberal arts education for students. The current foreign language requirement, developed as an important component of St. Olaf's revised general education curriculum in the 1990's, is one pathway to cultural insight. Foreign language specializations (including teaching majors and minors), immersion experiences through study abroad programs, and interdisciplinary programs such as Asian Studies, Hispanic Studies, Russian Studies, and Foreign Languages Across the Curriculum (FLAC) provide multiple avenues to the development of cultural awareness, understanding, and empathy. These various paths, considered together, constitute the *World Languages Curriculum*, a significant part of internationalization and interculturalization initiatives at St. Olaf College. World languages faculty seek to deepen students' understanding of other cultural contexts, intensify their experiences with cultures and societies other than their own, and heighten their cultural sensitivity through intercultural contact, both on campus and abroad.

This curriculum receives technological and staff support from the *World Languages Laboratory*, a space both physical and affective that is designed to:

- Enhance language acquisition of students by providing opportunities for meaningful communicative activities outside the language classroom;*
- Prepare students to encounter and interact with world language cultures via a wide variety of cultural texts;*

•Promote a greater understanding and a deeper appreciation of world languages and cultures outside the language classroom.

II. CURRENT WORLD LANGUAGES LABORATORY FACILITY

Location and Equipment

The current facility occupies a total of 3,100 sq. ft. of space on the second floor of Old Main Annex, a renovated barracks acquired as a temporary facility by the college in 1946. The most recent renovation of this space took place in 1991-92 when the college received a \$100,000 grant from the Culpepper Foundation for a state-of-the-art laboratory. At that time, the college provided an additional \$20,000 in order to prepare the Annex to accommodate the new equipment.

The Tandberg audio/video equipment is located in the main laboratory space of 1,340 sq. ft. This lab consists of 23 stations with audio/video capabilities and an additional 11 audio-only stations. The Tandberg lab is further supported by 3 satellite dishes which provide access to SCOLA, Deutsche Welle, TV5 France, and Univision programming. A small lounge area with newspapers and magazines in foreign languages is found at the southeast corner of this main space.

Additional spaces include a 270 sq. ft. computer lab, a 42 sq. ft. recording space, two small video viewing rooms, and a very small storage area for tapes.

Other related equipment includes Smart Carts (located in Old Main classrooms) for the use of all language instructors and developing technologies, such as the “Visor (palm pilot) Project” for students of Japanese who require added vocabulary and grammar practice. These types of complementary technologies are viewed as support, but not replacement, for an interactive, community space.

People and Programs Served by the Facility

The World Languages Laboratory supports the work of **38 faculty members** who teach the foreign languages offered at St. Olaf College: Spanish, French, German, Norwegian, Japanese, Chinese, Russian, Latin and Greek. This semester, the WLL serves **1,025 registered users (students)** who have made over **9,000 registered visits** to the facility, not including visits by entire classes, from September-November.

In addition, the WLL staff (Micki Johnson and Susan Jorgensen) collaborate with a good number of faculty and students in other related programs: Asian Studies, Russian Studies, Hispanic Studies, Foreign Languages Across the Curriculum (FLAC), Music, Philosophy, English, Math, American Studies,

Education, Great Conversation, and the College Archives. The staff provides audio/video support and space as needed.

The WLL has also played an important role in the Technologies Across Languages and Cultures (TALC) project funded by the Rockefeller Brothers and directed by Dr. Mary Cisar of the Department of Romance Languages. This project, based on faculty-student collaboration, seeks to strengthen the links between content-based instruction, faculty skills with new teaching technologies, and student learning at all levels of language instruction.

Not to be overlooked is the growing community of international students on the St. Olaf campus who rely on the World Languages Laboratory as their link to their homeland. For example, this semester, lab personnel tape regularly Korean news broadcasts from SCOLA for our students from Korea.

Finally, as part of a greater community outreach effort, the WLL staff provides assistance to the local high school for advanced placement exams in Spanish and German.

III. URGENT NEED: Equipment and Additional Space

State-of-the-art equipment is urgently need to ensure the continued operation of the WLL in order to support the goals of the World Languages Curriculum and internationalization efforts. Roberta Lembke of ITT has requested \$275,000 from the St. Olaf Capital Fund (Other Technologies) for equipment in 2002-2003 to be housed in **an appropriate space where room temperature and humidity can be controlled.**

Severe limitations of electrical/mechanical systems in Old Main Annex render this space less-than-adequate to support and maintain proper functioning of the WLL equipment. Because there are no dedicated circuits for the Annex, numerous brownouts are an inevitable, everyday occurrence in the WLL. Further, since air conditioning cannot be made available in this space, the staff is forced to use fans or open windows, both of which create noise that interferes greatly with listening comprehension and speaking practice. It is also impossible to accommodate more computer lab stations because of an insufficient number of portals.

The WLL staff has devoted enormous amounts of time and energy to ensure that all systems work properly. Yet, with the unpredictability of brownouts, they have been forced to turn away faculty and students several times throughout the semester.

Two recent incidents of equipment failure due to insufficient power supply resulted in a total shutdown of the current facility. The closing of the language lab in this manner on September 30, 2001 and October 9, 2001 had a tremendous

negative impact on both teaching and learning. All 1,025 registered users were affected by this shutdown. Because students were unable to complete lab assignments in a timely fashion, faculty had to revise their syllabi and in-class presentations and materials.

A more recent incident occurred November 7, 2001. This was the date set aside for testing of all Spanish 231 students (150 total). Because of insufficient current, the equipment did not function properly and nearly failed, which caused confusion, uncertainty, and anxiety.

IV. THE VISION: The World Languages Center (WLC) as an Integral Part of the St. Olaf Global Village

“Space Dreams”: From WLL to WLC

LLFAC has spent the last three years discussing the technological equipment needed to support the World Languages Curriculum. Last year, the committee met with James May, then Associate Dean for Humanities, to discuss the Humanities Framework plan. Pat Quade, Director of International and Domestic Off-Campus Studies, was also consulted about the role of language programs and the WLL in the intentional planning for internationalization of the campus. Roberta Lembke of IIT also provided important insights on new technologies and information regarding funding for equipment. Last spring, the committee prepared and sent a questionnaire to all language faculty requesting their input regarding the design of a new technological facility. Site visits were made to other language labs at Carleton College, Gustavus Adolphus College, Rice University, University of Houston and Episcopal High School in Houston, Texas. St. Olaf also hosted a visitor from the University of Minnesota Language Lab and a representative from Tandberg Educational Technologies. Two members of LLFAC also attended the international conference on technology for the enhancement of foreign language/culture instruction sponsored by IALLT. After gathering and analyzing all of this information, LLFAC prepared in August 2001 the following **Vision Statement for the World Languages Center**, a concrete embodiment of the global perspective proclaimed in the College’s mission statement.

THE VISION

1. Spaces for enhancing language acquisition

- Distribution/reception area (440 sq. ft.) with display space for cultural exhibits
- Two classrooms, one with Tandberg-style audio/video capabilities (1,000 sq. ft.) and another computer hybrid classroom for flexibility (1,000 sq. ft.)
- Audio/video library listening and viewing area (1,000 sq. ft.)
- Computer Lab (1,000 sq. ft.)

2. Areas for meeting and encountering world cultures

These areas would exist to provide an encounter with different world cultures by creating a space where students are immersed in a second language. These spaces will allow both face to face interactions with language instructors and students, as well as materials including magazines, newspapers, newscasts, movies, pronunciation tapes, and web articles.

- Four small group meeting/multi-use rooms (250 sq. ft. each)
- Two language lounges (400 sq. ft. each)

3. Technological and staff support spaces

- Office space (500 sq. ft.)
- Audio/video studio (400 sq. ft.) space would hold lighting, multi-cameras, set
- Production area for faculty (360 sq. ft.)
- Instructional support production area (800 sq. ft.) to include satellite editing, audio/video duplicating, digitizing benches
- Satellite receiver and server area (100 sq. ft.)
- Storage spaces (1,500 sq. ft.) for audio and video tapes/laserdiscs/DVDs

Total proposed space: 9,900 sq. ft.

Additional requirements:

- Ability to work from both platforms in every room
- Basic equipment needs:
 - Utility floors
 - TV5, Univision, SCOLA
 - Document projector and big screen (Samsung and Luma2) in each room
 - All rooms to be fully equipped with phone jacks, computer access, video ready, cable ready, etc.
 - All areas to be climate controlled for heat and humidity
 - All areas to be balanced for sound and light
- Design to allow for future technological developments

V. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE GLOBAL VILLAGE: Old Main, Steensland, St. Olaf Avenue International Corridor

“Space Realities”: The WLL in 2002-03

In its deliberations this fall, LLFAC has discussed the immediate need for equipment replacement and appropriate, available space for the World Languages Laboratory in 2002-03. Regardless of the space in question, there are two common

issues to be considered: 1) Meeting the guidelines of the American With Disabilities Act (ADA), and 2) Retro-fitting to meet technological specifications.

Possible locations, drawn from the Vacancy List of 10/26/01, include:

Old Main Annex: The advantage of this structure is its proximity to Old Main where nearly all of the foreign language/culture instruction takes place. However, since the Annex is not a “permanent” building, it would be an inappropriate use of the college’s resources to invest time and money in its renovation.

Flaten Hall: Its location near Old Main is a plus, but its future is uncertain. Details on square footage were not available from Pete Sandberg, space supervisor, when we inquired on 11/16/01.

Holland Hall: The former Home Economics Suite and the former Paracollege Suite, both listed as available spaces, are somewhat removed from Old Main and, more importantly, too small to accommodate a sufficient number of tech stations for use by language classes (25-30 students each).

Steensland: This location has several advantages from the point of view of LLFAC. First, its proximity to Old Main makes it an appropriate space to support the mission and goals of the WLL. Steensland is a building that is likely to remain for years to come. Thus, it could be used to meet some of the short-term goals of the WLL over the next few years and longer-term goals of other departments or programs in the future.

We envision the creation of a Global Village on the eastern end of the St. Olaf campus. **Old Main** would serve as anchor for international and intercultural interaction on campus, **Steensland** as extension through simulations in the laboratory setting, and **St. Olaf Avenue International Corridor** (Language Honor Houses, International Café, and International Living) as the culminating immersion experience. All of these experiences combined will prepare students better for participation in study abroad programs and facilitate the re-entry process once they have returned to the St. Olaf campus. Acquiring Steensland for the World Languages Laboratory would be an important step toward the realization of this vision of our Global Village.

However, LLFAC has two points of concern regarding the suitability of Steensland for the WLL. One involves the status of the building as an historic treasure. If we were to consider expansion of Steensland in the future, would we violate guidelines from the National Register? The other question is related to the amount of space available in Steensland at this time. Only 3,070 sq. ft. of its 4,150 sq. ft. is “usable” space. The vision for the World Languages Center could not be realized in such a space; however, LLFAC could reconsider ways to implement the Vision over the next several years, in light of space limitations. For example, if the Science Center were to be vacated in the near future, it could provide ample space for the IIT, International Studies, and the World Languages Center.

I. RESPONSES TO SPACE ASSIGNMENT PLANNING QUESTIONS

LLFAC received a copy of the “Space Assignment Guidelines”, dated October 26, 2001, from the Office of the Provost and Dean of the College. We have considered carefully each of the space planning questions in the creation of the World Languages Laboratory mission statement, the assessment of our current lab facility’s limitations, the statement of urgent need for equipment and space, and our vision for the World Languages Center. Although the narrative portions of this World Languages Laboratory proposal include the kind of information outlined in the space assignment guidelines, we wish to reiterate briefly our space needs in the specific responses below.

#1 What are the proposed uses for additional or reassigned space, who are the proposed users, and what is the duration of the proposed use?

The World Languages Laboratory, currently located in Old Main Annex, is in immediate need of a more appropriate space to house new language learning stations and other technological resources crucial to the mission of the program in foreign languages and cultures at St. Olaf College. Users of this space include faculty, staff, and students in all foreign language departments, primarily, as well as faculty, staff and students in Asian Studies, Russian Studies, Hispanic Studies, FLAC, Music, Philosophy, English, Math, American Studies, Education. Other uses include the Archives, the TALC grant, and the international student community at St. Olaf.

With the primacy of stewardship of resources available in mind, members of LLFAC have concluded that Steensland, one of the spaces designated for Humanities, would be the most appropriate space to meet the initial goals of our vision for a Global Village on the St. Olaf campus. This space could certainly serve the world languages faculty and students for the next five to ten years, depending on the time frame for implementation of the Framework Plan.

#2 What is the justification for adding or reassigning space for the proposed uses and users?

In Part III of this proposal, we outline the urgent need for state-of-the-art equipment in the WLL to support the goals of the World Languages Curriculum at St. Olaf. We anticipate the funding of new educational technologies for the 2002-2003 academic year. Countless technical failures due to the insufficiency of electrical/mechanical systems in Old Main Annex over the years, and particularly within the past few months, have led the LLFAC to make its request for a more permanent, appropriate space at this time.

#3 What are the benefits to people and program of additional or reassigned space?

The greatest immediate benefit of reassigned space for the WLL is the elimination of equipment failure. The electrical/mechanical limitations of the current facility have had a negative impact on the teaching and learning of foreign languages and cultures at St. Olaf College. Faculty and students alike must be assured of the availability of technological resources to carry out assignments that enhance language acquisition and comprehension of linguistic/cultural concepts in order to meet the goals of the World Languages Curriculum.

#4 How high of a priority is additional or reassigned space to the effective and/or efficient operation of the program or to the health, safety, comfort, or sense of community of the people?

In order to meet the goals of the World Languages Curriculum, demonstrate good stewardship of resources, maintain efficiency in operation of technological support, and create the sense of an international/intercultural community on the St. Olaf campus, we must consider an adequate space for the World Languages Laboratory as a high priority. If internationalization is one prong of our institutional assessment initiatives, then it is imperative that we provide appropriate technological space to realize the Global Village.

#5 What are the special requirements for additional or reassigned space?

Please see the list of technological resources, prepared by Susan Jorgensen of the World Languages Laboratory, appended to this proposal.

Revised February 2003

**TO: Rick Fairbanks,
Associate Dean for Humanities**

**FROM: Jolene Barjasteh, on behalf of the World Languages
Center Faculty Advisory Committee (WLCFAC, formerly LLFAC)**

**RE: REVISED PROPOSAL FOR WORLD LANGUAGES
CENTER LABORATORY SPACE**

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Consider the incidents of equipment failure due to insufficient power supply. These have resulted in a total shutdown of the current facility. For example, the closing of the language lab in this manner on September 30, 2001 and October 9, 2001 had a tremendous negative impact on both teaching and learning. All 1,025 registered users were affected by this shutdown. Because

students were unable to complete lab assignments in a timely fashion, faculty had to revise their syllabi and in-class presentations and materials.

Another recent incident occurred November 7, 2001. This was the date set aside for testing of all Spanish 231 students (150 total). Because of insufficient current, the equipment did not function properly and nearly failed, which caused confusion, uncertainty, and anxiety.

As a final example, this past fall (2002), an as yet unidentified creature (perhaps a mouse?) chewed through ribbon cable, which resulted in an outage of three units in the facility. This is an illustration of the problems created by rodents in an older, temporary-type building such as the Annex. While on the surface such a problem may seem trivial, it does indeed pose a threat to the full functioning of the laboratory equipment.

IV. THE VISION: The World Languages Center (WLC) as an Integral Part of the St. Olaf Global Village

“Space Dreams”: A New WLC

WLCFAC has spent the last three years discussing the technological equipment needed to support the World Languages Curriculum. Within the last two years, the committee met with James May, then Associate Dean for Humanities, to discuss the Humanities Framework plan. Pat Quade, Director of International and Domestic Off-Campus Studies, was also consulted about the role of language programs and the WLL in the intentional planning for internationalization of the campus. Roberta Lembke of IIT also provided important insights on new technologies and information regarding funding for equipment. In the spring of 2001, the committee prepared and sent a questionnaire to all language faculty requesting their input regarding the design of a new technological facility. Site visits were made to other language labs at Carleton College, Gustavus Adolphus College, Rice University, University of Houston and Episcopal High School in Houston, Texas. St. Olaf also hosted a visitor from the University of Minnesota Language Lab and a representative from Tandberg Educational Technologies. Two members of WLCFAC also attended the international conference on technology for the enhancement of foreign language/culture instruction sponsored by IALLT. After gathering and analyzing all of this information, WLCFAC prepared in August 2001 the following **Vision Statement for the World Languages Center**, a concrete embodiment of the global perspective proclaimed in the College’s mission statement.

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- Small group meeting/multi-use room(s)
- Language lounge(s)

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- Office space
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- Production area for faculty
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- Design to allow for future technological developments

V. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE GLOBAL VILLAGE: Old Main, Science Center or Steensland, St. Olaf Avenue International Corridor

“Space Realities”: The WLC in 2003-04

In its recent deliberations, WLCFAC has discussed the immediate need for equipment replacement and appropriate, available space for the World Languages Center in 2003-04. Regardless of the space in question, there are two common issues to be considered: 1) Meeting the guidelines of the American With Disabilities Act (ADA), and 2) Retro-fitting to meet technological specifications.

Old Main Annex: The advantage of this structure is its proximity to Old Main where nearly all of the foreign language/culture instruction takes place. However, since the Annex is scheduled to be demolished by the summer of 2005 or so, it would be an inappropriate use of the college's resources to invest time and money in its renovation.

Temporary Portable Facility: In the meantime, given the imminent loss of Old Main Annex, it appears that a temporary portable facility for the World Languages Center is the most likely option for space, at least for the next couple of years. Minimally, the WLC would require about 4500 sq. ft., to be configured as necessary. In addition, we would need to continue to use the 24-position computer room in Holland Hall currently designated for use by students of Japanese and Norwegian.

Steensland: This location has several advantages from the point of view of WLCFAC. First, its proximity to Old Main makes it an appropriate space to support the mission and goals of the WLC. Steensland is a building that is likely to remain for years to come. Thus, it could be used to meet some of the short-term goals of the WLC over the next few years and longer-term goals of other departments or programs in the future.

Science Center: If this building were to be vacated by the current Science faculty and renovated in the near future, it could provide ample space for the World Languages Center. Moreover, it could also accommodate world languages departments, the office of International and Domestic Off-Campus Studies, and IIT, among others. This centralization of missionally-related departments, programs and offices represents a logical next step in the realization of the internationalization of the St. Olaf campus.

The St. Olaf Global Village: Within the next ten years, members of WLCFAC envision the creation of a Global Village on the eastern end of the St. Olaf campus. **Old Main** could serve as anchor for international and intercultural interaction on campus, **Science Center (or Steensland)** as extension through simulations in the laboratory setting, and **St. Olaf Avenue International Corridor** (Language Honor Houses, International Café, and International Living) as the culminating immersion experience. All of these experiences combined will prepare students better for participation in study abroad programs and facilitate the re-entry process once they have returned to the St. Olaf campus. Securing space in the renovated Science Center or acquiring Steensland for the World Languages Center would be an important step toward the realization of this vision of our Global Village.

Please see the list of technological resources, prepared by Susan Jorgensen of the World Languages Center, appended to this proposal.