



Virginia Department of Planning and Budget
Project Request Justification

2006-2008 Biennium Date: July 22, 2005

A. General Information

1. Agency name: Virginia Tech 2. Agency code: 208
Construct:
3. Project title: Additional Recreation, Counseling, & Clinical Space 4. Agency priority: 21
5. Contact Person: M. Dwight Shelton, Jr.
6. Contact's telephone number: (540) 231-8775
7. Contact's e-mail address: mdsjr@vt.edu

B. Proposed Project

1. Project Cost:

General Fund/General Fund supported debt	
Nongeneral fund	
9 (c) revenue debt	13,000,000
NGF supported 9 (d) revenue bonds	
Total request	13,000,000

2. Project cost changes:

NONE

3. Description:

- This is a new project on the university's plan and is envisioned to provide 43,000 gross square feet of new construction to meet the growing demand for increased student counseling, clinical and recreation/exercise space to meet the expanding needs of our student body.
- The life expectancy of the project is 80 years with proper maintenance.
- The scope of the project is based on programmatic analysis including industry standards, peer comparisons, and observable overcrowding.
- The proposed funding calls for \$13 million of nongeneral fund debt authorization that will be repaid by student fees related to the Auxiliary enterprises.

4. Project scope change:

NONE

5. a. **Approved Master Site Plan:**
If not, explain:

Yes No

b. **2004-10 Capital Outlay Plan:**
If not, explain:

Yes No

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6. **Equipment for a previously funded project.**

NONE

7. **Supplement to a previously funded project.**

NONE

C. Project Justification

1. a. **Existing condition:**

- The clinical, counseling, and recreation programs are housed in McComas Hall, an 118,000 gross square foot auxiliary enterprise facility built in 1998.
- The **Schiffert Health Center** component does not have sufficient space to meet growing demand for exam and treatment rooms and office space for clinical practitioners. Maintaining high quality of services in this nationally accredited center is a primary consideration.
- The **McComas Hall Cook Counseling Center** component has had to limit the number of staff available to serve the students due to insufficient office space and, thus, has had difficulty meeting the needs of the students. Easily accessible mental health care is an increasing responsibility of the University in its efforts to assist students in overcoming problems that interfere with their academic success.
- The **Recreational Sports Center** component occupies over three-quarters of McComas Hall. Prior to construction in 1998, the building plan was downsized due to cost constraints. Over 3,000 students per day use the exercise and sports facilities, and there are often long waiting lines for weight and exercise machines in the evening. Over use and crowding are also issues for other programs such as basketball, volleyball, aerobics and cycling.

- Without new clinical, counseling and recreation space, the university can not meet the expectations of current or prospective students.

Higher Education Only

b. Facility Condition Index:

FCI _____

c. Space deficit:

Yes No

2. Programmatic information:

- The Schiffert Health Center will be expanded by 3,050 net square feet to accommodate the following five high priority needs:
 1. Establish two offices for physicians and four associated examination rooms to provide the best ratio for efficient service delivery for our student patients. The Addition of medical specialties such as dermatology and recreational sports medicine are now feasible in collaboration with the Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine faculty but additional space is required for any growth in staff.
 2. Expand the treatment room (ambulance receiving) to accommodate 5 holding beds over the current 3 holding beds.
 3. Expand laboratory space to accommodate medical equipment and needed personnel in a currently inadequate space. The maintenance of high quality standards is both a legal and professional responsibility.
 4. Add a nursing office, reception/waiting area, 2 restrooms, and additional storage space for medical supplies and health education materials.
 5. Add two additional offices and meeting spaces for Alcohol Abuse Prevention Center of 350 square feet. This growing program currently has only one office which is shared by the Director and 4-6 part time staff and graduate students. With the development of new programs, materials and grant proposals office space and meeting space for student groups is essential. It should be a high priority of the University to demonstrate its commitment to addressing this difficult and complex problem of alcohol abuse.
- The Cook Counseling Center will be expanded by 600 net square feet with offices for counselors, a support staff person and a group counseling room. This would allow further expansion of the Center's psychiatric services and group counseling programs to meet the continually growing demand for mental health care. The number of students requiring crisis intervention, support, and psychiatric treatment continue to rise at Virginia Tech and nationally. In an effort to keep pace and provide high quality services that often make the difference in student success these improvements are critical. National benchmark data and a local study indicate increasing numbers of students with serious psychiatric conditions.

- The Recreational Sports Center programs have been overcrowded and the focus of many complaints by our student users. Over 3,000 students per day use the exercise sports facilities in McComas Hall, and there are often long waiting lines for weight and exercise machines in the evening. Crowding is so severe that a staff monitor is necessary to insure that crowding doesn't exceed fire code requirements during the busiest times. An expansion of 27,550 net square feet would support the following four high priority needs:

1. Expand open recreation cardiovascular/weight training - This project would expand and provide much needed improvement of our current 4,000 square feet for this program in McComas Hall. Our current square footage for this type of activity is "grossly" undersized for an institution with 25,000 students. Over 3,000 students use McComas Hall per day, many of whom have to wait in line to enter the cardiovascular/weight training area. Once in the area, there can still be long delays to use the various types of equipment. There is also safety concerns related to the equipment being too close together.

We would also like to provide instruction to those students who are not familiar with cardiovascular/weight training equipment and need personal instruction. Currently, it is difficult to reserve space for these types of educational programs, since it reduces even more the available space and equipment for the majority of the users. An expansion of 15,000 square feet of cardiovascular/weight training space would help to serve more customers as demand continues to grow, allow for a safer place for those using our facilities, and provide additional programming to those who would like to use the facilities.

These estimated space needs are based on: 1) observed overcrowding for the past seven years, 2) by standards of exercise space needs published by national organizations, 3) by comparisons of peer institutions and other state institutions of comparable size.

2. Expand open recreation, intramural and club sport use of basketball/volleyball courts – Additional gym space is needed for basketball/volleyball courts in McComas Hall. With over 3,000 users in McComas Hall per day, students must queue up and wait to play basketball in the popular evening hours. We have a continuing demand to offer more open recreation volleyball time. With only three courts in McComas Hall, we are not meeting the demand of either of these two sports as they share the area. Finally, three courts do not allow us to offer intramural basketball in this facility. A minimum of four courts is needed. An expansion of five additional courts would allow for adequate space for both open recreation volleyball and basketball.
3. Expand fitness classes and programs – An expansion of approximately 1,000 square feet would provide much needed space to expand upon current fitness programming and offer a quality cycling program. Currently, cycling equipment uses space in an aerobics instruction area which limits scheduling for both programs. A separate space for cycling would help expand both offerings.
4. Expand support space to include classroom, conference room, and office space to provide necessary programmatic support – this space is needed to provide support to all programs. The university employs over 300 students per year in the recreation program, and there is no space to meet the needs of training our student staff. Training activities require the program to reserve facilities off-site. A classroom with

50 – 75 seat capacity and the capability of having open space is needed. Finally, some current offices have double occupancy and others are occupying spaces originally intended for storage. The expansion of office space would also correct these problems.

- All of the above mentioned expansion spaces would serve to continue current services which are severely overcrowded and will also allow the department to provide new and expanded programs that are currently limited. As mentioned above, with over 3,000 students using McComas Hall recreational facilities per day and with the Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine students now using Virginia Tech recreational facilities, this expansion is needed immediately to continue to give the student body the opportunity to manage stress, make healthy life long choices about exercise and diet, and to provide a fun and healthy outlet from the everyday challenges of university academics. Our existing facility has been a welcome addition for the student body at Virginia Tech. However the popularity of our programs and facilities has shown the need for additional space. An expansion of McComas Hall would continue to give students opportunities that are healthy and positive.

3. Alignment to strategic plan:

The addition of recreation, counseling, and clinical space will support Virginia Tech's strategic plan in the areas of Graduate Education and Undergraduate Education. This addition to McComas Hall will expand the exercise facilities and increase the level of counseling and clinical services available to Virginia Tech students in support of the following university goals:

Graduate Education:

1. Increase the quality of the graduate programs.

Undergraduate Education:

1. Maintain a current, relevant, and comprehensive undergraduate curriculum.
3. Create learning experiences for undergraduate students that maximize the benefits of attending a large research university.
5. Manage the undergraduate enrollment to ensure a quality undergraduate experience and fiscal responsibility.

D. Options Considered

Other options considered but not selected include leasing facilities or delaying the project entirely. Constructing an addition to McComas Hall is the selected option because it is the most cost effective solution to the shortage of clinical and exercise space.

Leasing is not a feasible option because it would require the purchase of duplicate clinical and exercise equipment, much of which could be shared in an expanded facility. It would also create scheduling difficulties for students and clinical staff that would have to commute to an off-campus location, resulting in under use of the leased facility and increased operational overhead.

Delaying the project to a future biennium is not a viable option because without the addition of new clinical, counseling and recreation space, the university can not meet the demands and expectations of current or prospective students.

E. Project Schedule Changes:

NONE