

CLASSIFIED STAFF NEEDS ASSESSMENT APPLICATION
Fall 2015

Name of Person Submitting Request:	Michael Lysak		
Program or Service Area:	Physics/Astronomy/Engineering		
Division:	Science		
Date of Last Program Efficacy:	Spring 2011		
What rating was given?	Continuation		
Current number of Classified Staff:	FT:	1	PT: 1
Position Requested	To change the present Half-Time Physics Laboratory Technician position to a Full-Time position		
Strategic Initiatives Addressed: (See Appendix A: http://tinyurl.com/l5oqoxm)	Institutional Effectiveness and Resource Management; Student Success		

Replacement Growth

If you checked replacement, when was the position vacated? _____

1. Provide a rationale for your request.

In recent years, with the addition of more Physics and Astronomy classes to meet demand, the faculty course load has grown significantly (presently at about 4.80), and, as a result, the corresponding responsibilities of the Physics Laboratory Technician have increased significantly as well. Presently, the Physics Lab tech is responsible for setting up 15 labs weekly, as well as assisting all Physics/Astronomy instructors (2 full time with overloads, and 4-5 part-time) with various lecture and lab demonstrations that are used to enhance the lecture and lab presentations; furthermore, only two lab rooms are available for these Physics/Astronomy labs, so each lab room gets multiple use, which demands more frequent equipment changes. Further, not only does all this lab and demonstration equipment need to be maintained and/or repaired, but the Physics Lab tech also orders equipment/supplies when necessary, and assists in other Science division activities such as Science and Technology Day. The Physics Lab Tech position is presently only half-time, and with the present/projected growth in our Physics/Astronomy program, there will be a need for the Physics lab tech position to be increased to full-time in order for the Physics lab tech to properly perform all necessary tasks related to the support of lecture and lab instruction. Furthermore, in the near future, the Planetarium Specialist will be retiring; as there is no foreseeable replacement for this position, this will create a tremendous loss: there will be no vital planetarium services available for astronomy lecture and/or lab instruction, none available for other physical science instructors or for other disciplines, and no planetarium shows, tours, or presentations available for the many schools and individuals of our local community. On average, the Planetarium presently serves in excess of 3000 elementary, middle school, and high school students yearly; the Planetarium is clearly a most valuable academic resource and provides vital community outreach activities. The department is proposing that there be a new faculty position for a Physics/Astronomy instructor who could help teach the growing numbers of Physics and Astronomy classes, add stability and growth to the Astronomy program, and work to guide and grow the Planetarium programs and resources together with maintaining and supporting all the vital Planetarium activities provided by the Planetarium Specialist; the department will then correspondingly also need the Physics lab tech

position to be increased to full time in order that the lab tech assist not only in the needs of the Physics/Astronomy lectures and labs, but also in the needs of the Planetarium programs for our college classes as well as various academic and community outreach activities.

2. Indicate how the content of the latest Program Efficacy Report and current EMP data support this request. How is the request tied to program planning? (*Reference the page number(s) where the information can be found on Program Efficacy*).

According to the EMP for Physics/Astronomy, some of the program goals/challenges/action plans are to maintain lab equipment and supplies for quality education, update the Physics/Astronomy labs and their related equipment needs, and update/revise the Physics/Astronomy labs and related equipment with Department lab technician. Such goals and challenges cannot be adequately met with a half-time Physics lab technician. The Physics/Astronomy 2011 Program Efficacy document states (pg. 18) that "...the Physics/Astronomy laboratory and lecture programs have been negatively impacted by having only part-time laboratory assistance..." Also, this Efficacy report states (pg. 15) there is a significant projected growth rate predicted for jobs in biophysics and biochemistry, physics education, engineering, geo-related sciences, nursing, and physician's assistants, all of which would predict an increase in Physics enrollment beyond our present growth experience. The Physics/Astronomy department program has rapidly grown and expanded even beyond the capability of our half-time Physics lab technician. If the department is to maintain quality instruction and to successfully plan for such enrollment increases, we will need to increase the Physics lab tech position to full-time.

3. Indicate if there is additional information you wish the committee to consider (*for example, regulatory information, compliance, updated efficiency, student success data, planning, etc.*).

As stated in the 2011 Program Efficacy document (pg. 12), the productivity of the Physics/Astronomy department has grown significantly from a WSCH/Faculty Load ratio low of 461 (2006-2007); the ratio for 2014-2015 was 599. For 2014-2015, the department's Success rate was 76%, and its Retention rate was 89%; these rates have, in fact, moderately increased over the years. As student populations increase, to maintain or improve both the success and retention rates, clearly there will be a need for the department to offer more lecture and lab sections, and as an additional full-time faculty will be important in filling that need, so too will there be a strong need for a full time Physics lab tech to support and maintain the quality of lecture/lab instruction. Finally, in Fall of 2015, the Science Division has ranked this Classified Staff Needs request as #2 out of two requests.

4. What are the consequences of not filling this position?

Since the Physics Laboratory Technician retired at the end of 2005, the department has had to use part-time employees in order to properly perform all necessary lab tech tasks related to the support of lecture and lab instruction. In light of increasing numbers of Physics/Astronomy lecture and lab sections, without proper support from a full-time Physics lab tech, high quality instruction for our students would not be possible, and such lack of support stifles successful attempts of program growth, development and expansion, and negatively impacts enrollments, and, ultimately, productivity. Finally, without a full-time lab tech to assist faculty in assuming the responsibilities of the Planetarium Specialist, a most vital academic resource and a most important community outreach tool will be lost.