



Student Technology Fee Committee (STFC) Annual Allocation Request

ALLOCATION REQUEST DATE INFORMATION

Date Created: 2021-02-17 10:00:34

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ALLOCATION REQUEST TITLE/DESCRIPTION

Request Title: Mailchimp Subscription for Husky 411 and ASUWT newsletter

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, as well as ASUWT's newsletter.

ALLOCATION REQUEST INFORMATION

Department Name: Student Life

Request Code: 21A0271

Contact Names: Daniel Nash

UW Tacoma Affiliation: Not Set

UWT Email Address: nashd@uw.edu

Phone Number: 2536924813

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

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?

The Center for Student Involvement (CSI) team of Student Life is 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 CSI uses MailChimp to publish Husky 411, a weekly listing of events, programs, and involvement opportunities offered by Registered Student Organizations and campus departments. Listings are submitted via the Advertising Request Form on the Dawgden 2.0 website.

The Associated Students of UW Tacoma also use MailChimp to release their Office of the President emails, as well as election updates. Other miscellaneous uses include occasional informational announcements from Welcome Days, the AVC for Student Life's Finals Reminders, and tri-campus announcements such as Husky 100 updates and the 2019-2020 school year's Climate Survey.

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, including how many subscribers open their emails, which emails elicit the biggest response, which weeks they're eliciting the biggest response, and the predicted demographics of the subscribers who open emails. MailChimp also provides recommendations on the best time of day to send emails in order to maximize readership.

This subscription empowers us to run the largest information-sharing listserv on the UW Tacoma campus. For several years it has provided a centralized, easy-to-access directory to campus events and opportunities. It has only become more vital over the past year, as remote operations eliminated other advertising routes such as campus television ads and posters.

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. Each advantage is discussed below.

In regard to the reader-friendly designs, MailChimp automatically adjusts designs to fit the screen of a desktop/laptop, smartphone, or tablet. This can be especially convenient for smartphone email users, as some smartphones such as the iPhone allow for calendar events to be created whenever the user clicks on a date. 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 that students should be able to choose whether they receive emails about campus events. MailChimp allows the student to easily unsubscribe if they wish, putting the student in control of their inbox. But the majority of students maintain their Husky 411 subscription. In Winter Quarter 2021 so far, only 24 of nearly 4,900 students have chosen to unsubscribe.

Readers have given us positive feedback, saying that the format is visually pleasing and easier to read. It was also identified as a "best practice" in the results of a survey on UW tri-campus communication methods conducted by an IT department on the Seattle campus.

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 and ASUWT are the primary users of our MailChimp account, and will continue to be the primary users if STFC renews our funding. Department professional staff occasionally use MailChimp to process after-hours emergency announcements or otherwise fill in for an RSO Marketing Assistant absence. The emails themselves are sent to all students on campus, minus those who unsubscribe; we update the listserv every quarter with a list of currently enrolled students provided by the Registrar's office.

The account's average open rate so far this academic year (which includes both Husky 411 and ASUWT's newsletters) has been 37.2%, compared to a 21.33% average open rate among all MailChimp newsletters, according to information in the article "Email Marketing Benchmarks and Statistics by Industry." Husky 411 open rates by week have ranged from 10.8% to 52.3%. The most common rate seems to fluctuate between 35%-40%. In the past, there seemed to be fluctuation in open rates depending on whether a quarter was at its beginnings, in midterms/finals, etc. This year, open rates seem to have remained relatively steady week-to-week, though open rates were at their highest at the beginning of Autumn and Winter quarters.

ASUWT has released two Office of the President emails this year, both in Winter Quarter, earning open rates of 35.6% and 35.7%. During Autumn Quarter, they used the account to release ballot reminders and news about student senatorial elections. The ballot reminders ranged between 7.7%-9.4%. A notice about an SIAS tie-breaker election enjoyed a 36.7% open rate.

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 CSI employs an RSO Marketing Assistant (funded by SAFC), whose responsibilities include managing the Husky 411 newsletter and processing other advertising requests on DawgDen. 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, though they have worked remotely since Spring 2020; MailChimp and other services can be accessed from any Internet-connected computer. **We are requesting \$850.90 for the 2021-2022 Academic Year, covering 10 months of MailChimp service.**

This is approximately a \$22 increase over our request for the 2020-2021 academic year. MailChimp's pricing is based on audience size and the inclusion of ASUWT newsletters and other uses detailed in the answer to Question 1 incur no extra cost.

In September 2020, MailChimp increased its prices for all subscriber tiers by \$2/month. Our monthly costs so far have ranged between \$73.82 (5,001-5,200 subscribers) and \$96.66 (5,600-10,000 subscribers). The larger amount has been billed only in months when the quarterly subscription list is swapped out, as MailChimp counts the new list as additional subscribers--they will occasionally refund the amount if emailed, but not always. Enrollment fell slightly in Winter Quarter, so our next bill is estimated to be \$66.11.

Despite remote operations, enrollment increased slightly to a (slim) record high in Autumn Quarter 2020. With that in mind, we believe it is reasonable to prepare for an Autumn Quarter 2021 increase that could bump our average bill to the 5,200-5,600 tier, which would be \$76.99/month (\$85.09 with \$8.10 tax)

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 use. 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	\$76.99	\$0.00	\$8.10	\$850.90
OVERALL TOTAL:					\$850.90