April 16, 2020

STF Committee,

The Student Technology Center would like to endorse the WWU Makerspace Equipment STF proposal. If funded, we are planning to support this proposal by offering staffing for open access hours in the space, providing equipment workshops available freely to all students on campus, and aid in its promoting though the STC network of faculty and courses as we would any of our technology based workshops.

When an initial STF funded 3D printers that were to be located in the STC it created a buzz in students. For the first time on campus, students of all disciplines could freely access 3D printing to not just incorporate in their academics; but also provide a means for them to think and make creatively. Expanding access to makerspace equipment on campus, as well as training to create using them, are services that the STC hears regularly from students attending our current limited offerings. In the past four academic years, we have built a community of students and faculty around their usage within courses. With it, cross discipline collaborations have developed providing students avenues to use the equipment in new meaningful ways that adds skills, in prototyping and physical manufacturing by example, that are seen as valuable added skills in many careers after students graduate WWU. However, the STC being located in the center library without proper ventilation and sound dampening facilities has provided unique limitations for expanding makerspace offerings, and further serve the student demand for expanded services. Yet, despite these limitations, students continue to show a rise in interest for the use of more makerspace tools on campus, even if the library isn’t the space that can support it. We have also seen the rise of faculty, in design and engineering disciplines just by example, integrating makerspace technologies for projects, but have to recommend students use the Bellingham Makerspace to get their assignments done because of our limitations.

This will be a great resource to offer to our students as they are able to return to campus. In funding this STF, it would further support the demands for maker-skills students have been looking for as well as help continue to foster interdisciplinary interactions amongst students utilizing the space in a wide range of creative ways. And the STC wants to help continue to support the technology literacy of students across campus.

Sincerely,

David Hamiter and AJ Barse
Managers Student Technology Center