

**Subject:** Funding Request - Jira License for Information Systems Management and Data Analytics Class (BA5200)

Dear Dean Johnson and the College of Business Dean's Advisory Council,

I trust this letter finds you well. I am writing to formally request funding in the amount of \$4,075 to acquire a full year license of Jira, a leading project management and issue tracking software, for the benefit of the graduate level Information Systems Management and Data Analytics course, within the College of Business.

### **Background**

In the evolving landscape of information systems and data analysis, students require access to industry-standard tools to enhance project management and collaboration skills. Jira, a widely adopted platform since 2002 with over 65,000 company adoptions, excels in facilitating efficient project planning, tracking, and collaboration. Notably used by industry giants like Delta, Dropbox, and NASA, Jira is a proven solution for large-scale business units. Our students, currently engaged in an open source Solid Pod application project, aim to provide users easy access to both simple and complex personal wellness information. This multi-year, multi-team project incorporates elements of Agile program management, specifically the SAFe framework, ensuring effective management across teams

### **Benefits for Students:**

1. *Enhanced Project Management Skills:* Jira will allow our students to learn and apply best practices in project management, fostering a deeper understanding of project lifecycles and methodologies.
2. *Real-world Experience:* Many organizations across various industries utilize Jira for their project management needs. By incorporating Jira into our curriculum, we are ensuring that our students are well-versed in tools commonly used in the workforce.
3. *Collaboration and Communication:* Jira facilitates seamless collaboration among team members. This will promote teamwork and communication skills among our students, which are essential in today's workplace.

### **Educational Merit:**

The Information Systems Management and Data Analysis program aims to equip our students with practical skills that align with industry needs. Jira, with its robust project management features, will provide our students with hands-on experience in organizing, tracking, and managing complex projects. This exposure to industry-standard tools will better prepare them for the challenges they will face in their professional careers.

Introducing a Jira license for this current course not only addresses the immediate needs of our graduate students but also has the potential to serve as a pilot initiative for the College of Business (COB). If Jira proves to be a valuable asset for our current project, expanding the license to accommodate more seats could be a strategic move. This scalability opens up possibilities for benefiting a broader spectrum of students within the COB. The utilization of this industry-standard tool has the potential to benefit both undergraduate and graduate students across various classes including Project Management, Advanced Project Management, and Management Information Systems. By establishing Jira as a pilot within the COB, we pave the way for enhancing project management education and skills across various programs, contributing to a more comprehensive and impactful learning environment.

### **Insufficiency of Free Software Management Tools:**

While free versions of project management tools are available, it is crucial to highlight their limitations in meeting the specific needs and educational objectives of our graduate class. The free versions often come with

feature restrictions, scalability challenges, and may lack the integrated workflow required for a comprehensive understanding of project lifecycles. Notably, our class initially benefited from a free classroom license for Jira; however, this license was revoked due to the large number of students enrolled in the class. To address these limitations effectively, a full Jira license is being pursued, as it offers a complete and industry-aligned solution, ensuring a more realistic and beneficial learning experience for all participants.

**Budget Breakdown:**

The requested funding of \$4,075 is intended to cover the annual license cost for Jira (see Table 1; Option A). A twelve month license for up to 100 users will ensure uninterrupted access for our 41 graduate students throughout the spring 2024 semester, as well as accommodating the Fall class, which consists of 70-80 students. The license will provide additional seats that can be tested by other faculty, staff, or students in the College of Business (COB). Alternatively, if the full investment seems too large, an alternative proposal is to purchase a 3-month license for up to 50 users specifically for piloting by this class, with an estimated cost of \$611(Option B). academic year.

Table 1. Cost breakdown for Jira Software licensing options.

Options	Subscription Length	Number of Users (Max)	List Price	Cost with 50% Academic Discount
A	12 months	100	<del>\$8,150</del>	<b>\$4,075</b>
B	3 months	50	<del>\$1,223</del>	\$611

It is also important to note that our team has been in contact with Michigan Tech IT. It has been confirmed that the purchase could be made using a departmental purchasing card. Additionally, Jira can be properly configured such that we will be able to delegate admin roles to manage the rest of the instance without exposing payment card information.

**Conclusion:**

Investing in a Jira license for the Information Systems Management and Data Analysis program is an investment in the future success of our students. Jira's integrated workflow capabilities will contribute to a comprehensive understanding of project lifecycles, especially in the context of utilizing elements of Agile program management frameworks like the SAFe (Scaled Agile Framework). This integration will foster a more dynamic and adaptive approach to project execution, optimizing efficiency and responsiveness to changing requirements. By providing our students with access to industry-standard tools, we are better preparing them for the challenges and expectations of the modern workplace.

I kindly request the College of Business Board's support in allocating the necessary funds to acquire the Jira license for our program. I am available at your convenience to discuss this proposal further and address any questions you may have.

Thank you for considering this request. I appreciate your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Mackenzie Baker, BA5200 Project Manager