

CIT Update July 2002 – December 2002

1. OUTREACH:

Develop faculty awareness of possible uses of IT to support teaching and learning

Goals for the year:

- Showcase innovative faculty at Duke who are using technology in teaching
- Offer training, speakers, and workshops that highlight uses of technology in teaching
- Provide discipline-specific examples of IT use
- Help individual faculty identify ways technology can be useful in their teaching
- Redesign CIT website to serve as a highly useful resource for faculty exploring instructional technology
- Continue graduate student training in uses of technology for teaching
- Share information broadly and seek faculty input on instructional technology planning at Duke

Activities to date:

CIT Fall events series

CIT hosted nineteen public events including technology demonstrations, guest speakers and Blackboard training. Individuals who attended rated these sessions highly, but attendance was low at most events. Thus, we are concentrating our efforts this spring on our IT Showcase only.

Instructional Technology Showcase planning

Planning is underway for CIT's IT Showcase, in April 2003. This event will highlight close to 50 faculty projects and is CIT's premier offering for raising faculty awareness of possibilities with IT.

PDA channel for disseminating information

People with Palms and other handheld devices can now get up to date information on CIT events, CIT news, Blackboard tips, and Duke faculty projects via the CIT's new PDA channel.

Faculty consulting

Individual faculty from a wide variety of schools and departments met with CIT staff to discuss specific ways they could use technology in teaching their courses. The most common topics were converting materials into digital formats, using streaming media in web sites, and planning for web-based training and education programs.

Redesigning Blackboard and CIT websites

CIT is in the process of redesigning its Web sites to meet the growing demand for dynamic content and to provide more extensive instructional technology support to the university community. Our redesign efforts are influenced by other university projects such the planned purchase of a university content management system and website redesign efforts within Perkins Library. CIT has undertaken an investigation of a new architecture for its Web services.

2. INNOVATION:

Launch innovations in IT and support integration of technology into teaching and learning

Goals for the year:

- Identify technology tools of broad interest to faculty and students and support their use of these tools
- Provide grants and support services to encourage faculty to try innovative projects
- Conduct pilot projects with new technologies

- Expand use of Blackboard and increase its functionality and smooth integration with other university systems
- Develop plans for migrating successful innovations into general computing environment
- Enhance student worker program to support faculty projects

Activities to date:

CIT Faculty Fellows 2002

We are half way through our first year of this new, yearlong support program for 14 faculty and one graduate student undertaking new instructional technology projects. Following a week of training and planning in May 2002, CIT staff worked one-on-one with Fellows through the Summer and Fall, hosted several group meetings, and provided additional materials and help via a Blackboard site.

Incentive grants for highly innovative projects

In October 2002, CIT issues a call for projects that involve multiple faculty within a department or school, have the potential to make a significant impact on teaching and learning and are a high priority for a department or school. The CIT advisory board reviewed the initial proposals and will be selecting a few projects for support during the 2003-04 academic year.

New mini-grant program to support small projects

Nine faculty have used CIT's new mini-grant program, which provides up to \$2,500 in direct costs, student worker assistance and/or reserved access to equipment in the CIT Project Workroom. This program supports faculty who already have a project plan and are prepared to conduct most of the project activities on their own. Requests for mini-grants are accepted throughout the year and filled based on CIT staff evaluation of the project plan and availability of funds and student workers.

Streaming media server for instructional use

CIT manages a RealServer streaming media server to support faculty use of media in courses. The server, which began as a pilot two years, currently hosts 30 Gb of multimedia content and serves students in 31 classes. In collaboration with OIT, CIT is in the process of upgrading the server and of configuring a failover server, so that media services can continue if the primary server fails. CIT staff are working with OIT to plan for a university streaming media server supported by OIT.

Expanded usefulness of Blackboard through new services and pilot projects

Using SISS data from PeopleSoft, the Blackboard team automatically created course websites and generated user accounts for Fall 2002. The auto-creation of course websites is one factor in the 20% increase in the number of actively used Blackboard course websites that took place this Fall.

The Blackboard Communities pilot provided collaborative workgroup spaces to the Duke community. The Blackboard office visits pilot provided one-on-one Blackboard assistance/training to faculty in their offices upon request. In conjunction with the Help Desk, CIT piloted extended Blackboard support hours in Fall 2002. All three pilots will continue through the Spring. The Blackboard group is currently exploring integration of e-reserves, improved course list organization and use of Building Blocks to extend Blackboard's usefulness.

Investigation of survey tool for instructional use

A number of faculty at Duke have expressed interest in a functional and easy-to-use survey tool that they could use for instructional purposes. Duke does not currently have such a tool in wide deployment. OIT is devoting some attention to addressing this need and CIT has been an active participant in that process. In late summer 2002, CIT sponsored a pilot of Webslingerz' SmartASK survey tool with two faculty members and six staff.

Investigation of PDAs in teaching and learning

CIT assisted a Sociology professor with a project to use the PocketClassroom (now, ClassInHand)

software developed by Wake Forest University in his class. CIT enabled him to obtain a Compaq iPAQ with wireless network connectivity for use in a trial project and, in collaboration with Arts and Sciences Computing, assisted him in the installation and setup of the device.

Establishment of pilot planning process

CIT drafted a document outlining the process CIT uses in planning software pilots, in conjunction with the group's work investigating possible Blackboard plug-ins to test. This document will serve as a baseline process for all CIT pilots, and will offer a best practice for use by the University community.

CIT working groups investigating new technologies

To monitor technology trends and develop expertise in conducting innovative technology projects, CIT implemented a system of working groups in Summer 2002. The working groups currently are investigating streaming video, course management systems, instructional technology trends, interactive technologies, and web architecture and systems. The groups have worked through the last 6 months to build knowledge in their respective areas, identify deliverables to the rest of CIT and the campus community, and to develop effective communication mechanisms within CIT.

The CIT Video Working Group assessed the current internal and external documentation on using video in the CIT, produced new documentation to assist CIT staff in consulting and for external use with Duke faculty, and explored ways that the CIT staff can stay up to date on current trends with video technology.

CIT's Web Working Group is monitoring developments in Web architecture and interface design, developing resources for consulting with faculty engaged in Web-based projects and on identifying ways to stay informed and up-to-date on Web developments on campus and in the industry as a whole.

The Interactive Learning Group produced new documentation on interactive learning tools such as Flash, Java applets, DHTML and Director to assist CIT staff in consulting with faculty.

The Course Management Systems working group investigated both open source and commercial alternatives to Blackboard to ensure that we are prepared for industry trends and using software that best fits our institutional needs.

The Instructional Technology Trends working group is developing a database of instructional technology resources which will eventually be shared with the university community and is tracking IT activities at a number of other universities.

Expanded project room functionality and use

In response to faculty demands, the CIT added a second video editing workstation to the Instructional Technology Labs. Faculty can now, in addition to creating web movies and edited videotapes, make interactive DVD's for classroom presentations. The Instructional Technology Lab also added a high-quality large format scanner that has been used for digitizing larger materials from special collections. The extensive web-based documentation CIT developed for Instructional Technology Lab equipment and software is now used by several other groups on campus.

Enhanced student worker program to support faculty projects

Eight student workers supported a variety of faculty projects throughout the Fall and will be continuing to work this Spring. CIT staff revised the program materials, improved training, hired new students and experimented with new services supported by student workers. CIT student workers responding to an end-of-semester survey indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the program in general, the tasks to which they have been assigned and the quality of CIT supervision.

3. PARTNERSHIPS:

Form partnerships with private industry, foundations, other educational institutions and the local community to leverage resources and encourage exchange of ideas

Goals for the year:

- Monitor technology trends and develop expertise needed to implement innovative technology projects; serve as a source of information about new technologies for the campus community
- Conduct pilot projects with new technologies to develop awareness of potential at Duke and issues related to introduction of new technologies
- Expand professional activities and networks with individuals outside Duke, such as technology vendors, faculty and staff at other universities, and the surrounding community
- Leverage internal resources through grants and donations

Activities to date:

Blackboard-related users groups

CIT staff are working actively in local and national Blackboard users groups, both to gain expertise related to Blackboard support and to be valuable members of the Blackboard users community. These groups include the Blackboard Building Blocks Open Source group, the Blackboard Southeast Users Conference Group, the Foreign Language Blackboard Users Group, and the Association of Blackboard Users group (which is attempting to become a chartered and official user's group).

Triangle Area CITs community

CIT initiated a meeting with staff from CIT-type organizations in the Triangle/Triad area, in November 2002. The purpose of the meeting was to form collaborative working relationships with these staff, exchange ideas and brainstorm together about program offerings and program planning at our respective institutions. The collaboration will continue with a second group meeting at Wake Forest University in April 2003.

Consulting with external visitors

Visitors from Sangyo University in Japan, Essex College in England and U.S. Joint Military Intelligence College came to learn about Duke's CIT. CIT frequently receives requests from faculty and IT directors at other colleges for information about its organization and services.

CIT participation in professional meetings

CIT represented Duke and gave presentations at several national professional meetings, served in organizations supporting community technology initiatives and took classes to continue their professional development.

4. PLANNING:

Promote coordination of effort and collaborative planning across units responsible for technology support at Duke

- Contribute to University IT planning efforts through participation in committee work and special planning groups
- Conduct joint projects with other IT organizations
- Share information across IT groups
- Convene task forces and evaluation groups around new technologies

Activities to date:

Arts & Sciences departmental IT planning

In conjunction with Dean Lee Willard from Arts & Sciences, CIT staff met with 8 departments in Summer and Fall 2002 to learn how instructional technology is used in the department, what specific training or support would encourage wider use of instructional technology, and what the department's vision is for the use of instructional technology. As follow up to these meetings, CIT staff offered customized training in departments, provided information about discipline-specific resources for IT, connected library resource specialists with departments, advised on departmental digital image projects in connection with the Luna project in Perkins library and summarized departmental priorities for the Deans in Art & Sciences and other university IT planning groups.

Training for IT staff

Planning is underway for a new CIT program to provide training to staff in the schools who support faculty in using instructional technology. A pilot group of staff will participate in training in late January and feedback from that pilot will shape future offerings.

Froshlife project

CIT is working with OIT staff in their "Froshlife" student iMovie competition. This project, sponsored by Apple and other local and national partners, will promote OIT's new multimedia cluster that students may use for working with scanning, audio, and video and will encourage more creative use of multimedia in class assignments by students.

Participation and leadership in campus technology planning groups

CIT staff participated in numerous cross-unit committees and working groups, with the intention of sharing information and expertise, and fostering communication between groups to coordinate instructional technology offerings for Duke faculty and students. Randy Riddle convened a new group with IT staff representatives from across campus to explore the growing faculty interest in streaming audio and video to share ideas for supporting faculty projects.

Blackboard Advisory Group

The Blackboard Advisory Group, comprised of faculty and technology support staff from across the schools at Duke, serves to provide input to the decision-making process about Blackboard, and provides feedback about Blackboard-related policies at Duke. This semester, the group was instrumental in providing feedback about policies about freshman schedules in Blackboard, an e-reserves integration with Blackboard, waitlist policies in Blackboard, discussions on use of course management systems in general, and other Blackboard-related issues.

Blackboard project implementation

CIT in collaboration with staff from several OIT groups and from the SISS office collaborate to plan and implement changes to the Blackboard system, and to maintain the system in working order. This Blackboard project team and the good working relationships of its members, is essential to the effective maintenance of the Blackboard system, and the rapid response to user needs and suggestions. This team has been in place since Fall 2001, with the upgrade to Blackboard 5.5, and will continue to support the next Blackboard upgrade in Spring and Summer 2003.

Fall orientation activities for faculty and students

CIT staff participated in orientation activities for new faculty, new graduate students, and freshman in conjunction with the Provost's office, the Graduate School and OIT.

Planning with library staff

CIT participate in Library search committees, joint planning with library technical staff, ongoing planning with other library directors, participation in Perkins renovation team, and shared support of pilot projects such as LUNA and the e-reserves integration with Blackboard.

5. ASSESSMENT:

Assess CIT initiatives to ensure that efforts are focused on effective and sustainable projects.

Goals for the year:

- Establish clear goals and evaluation strategies for all major CIT programs
- Provide summary reports and recommendations to Duke administration, IT groups and faculty
- Use evaluation data to modify CIT goals and activities and to offer input to other IT planning groups
- Consult with individual faculty on assessment plans for their instructional technology projects

Activities to date:

Blackboard user surveys

In order to understand how Blackboard does and does not meet user needs, CIT conducted several user surveys related to Blackboard this Fall. A survey in mid-fall was designed to determine whether CIT's advertising was raising faculty awareness of the Blackboard service, and whether support options for Blackboard were known and useful to faculty. A second survey targeted non-Blackboard users, in an attempt to discover their reasons for not using Blackboard. At the end of the semester, two separate user surveys (faculty and student) were conducted to gather general feedback about user response to Blackboard features and implementation at Duke. Results of these semester surveys are used to continually improve the Blackboard service at Duke.

Grant and Fellows program evaluation

Evaluation activities are built into many facets of the CIT Incentive Grants and CIT Fellows programs. We survey the faculty for their feedback and help faculty develop plans for evaluating student attitudes and student learning in connection with the introduction of new technologies in their courses.

Review of Flashlight project on IT assessment

CIT recently purchased a one year subscription to the national Flashlight project and will be seeking ways to use their question banks or evaluation data from other schools to help us understand the impact of IT use at Duke.

Faculty feedback on CIT activities

In addition to the formal mechanisms for gathering faculty input (surveys, CIT advisory board, etc.) CIT also collects email and informal feedback from faculty to use in evaluating and improving our services. A few examples are attached.

Project tracking database

CIT is experimenting with a database for keeping track of support projects and the resources devoted to them. When complete, this database should provide better accounting of how CIT supports projects and offer insights into what resources are needed for successful projects.