

CIT 2004-2005 Faculty Fellows Orientation Report

Yvonne Belanger
 Program Evaluator, CIT
 June 8, 2004

Executive Summary

The Duke Center for Instructional Technology conducted an orientation for its 13 newly appointed 2004-2005 [Faculty Fellows](#) during the entire week of May 10 – May 14, 2004. The week's activities were designed as a set of workshops and discussions about the Fellows program and its goals, introduction to a variety of technologies for classroom instruction and their effective uses, project development, and individual consultations.

Data were gathered from daily feedback forms, and 11 out of the 13 Fellows completed a comprehensive final survey evaluating their orientation week experience. Fellows found the experience to be valuable and made many positive comments about the experience. Based on the data gathered, the goals for the orientation week as set out by CIT prior to the program were achieved. One clear element of the orientation's successfulness was the variety of topics and activities included that met the diverse needs of Fellows with different project topics and levels of technology comfort and skill.

Orientation Week Overview

The week's activities were coordinated by the CIT staff. The group activities included hands-on workshops, discussions, guest speakers, presentations of technologies for classroom instruction, and project planning and development sessions. In addition, each Fellow was assigned a CIT staff member liaison to provide individualized consulting and assistance for the duration of their project. Fellows worked throughout the week with their CIT consultant to refine and elaborate their plans for implementing and evaluating their individual projects.

Orientation Week Goals

By the end of Orientation Week, each Fellow should:

- Develop a draft project implementation and evaluation plan
- Develop an understanding of best practices and model resources for instructional technology in their discipline
- Have an understanding of a range of technology tools which can support their teaching and basic models for designing technology-based materials and activities
- Develop ideas on expanding instructional technology skills and knowledge as they teach at Duke and on how they can be a resource in their department during the Fellows year

Finally, the Fellows Orientation week begins the process of building a cohort of faculty who can share ideas with one another throughout the Fellows year and beyond.

2004-2005 Program Participants

Thirteen Fellows were selected by the CIT Advisory Board and CIT staff as individual Fellows. These 10 Faculty and 3 Graduate Student partners in Track I of CIT's Fellows program include:

Matt Cohen & Allison Dushane, *English*
 Ingeborg Walther, *German*
 Ulrike Stroszeck, *Romance Studies*
 Sucheta Mazumdar & Zihui Tang, *History*
 Daniel Foster, *Theater*
 Aaron White, *Medical Psychiatry*
 Alyssa Perez-Edwards, *Biology*
 Deborah Gold & Joceyln Bailey, *Sociology*
 Nestor Schmajuk & Jose Larrauri, *Psychological & Brain Sciences*

Orientation Week Activities

The Orientation Week was organized around a separate theme for each day. On each day, relevant tools were introduced and best practices discussed. The table below summarizes the themes for each day and gives an examples technology tools that Fellows explored.

	Theme for the Day	Sample Tool
<i>Mon</i>	Presenting information	▪ Microsoft PowerPoint and Adobe Acrobat
<i>Tues</i>	Active learning	▪ Java Applets and Flash
<i>Wed</i>	Encouraging communication	▪ Blackboard discussion boards & virtual chat
<i>Thurs</i>	Assessing student learning & Evaluating your project	▪ Blackboard assessment tools ▪ ViewsFlash survey software

Friday's activities included finalizing project plans and discussing agendas for follow-up meetings, so no new tools were introduced. Participants completed assignments related to each day's theme as well as completing individual project work. In addition to presentations, discussions, and workshops led by CIT staff, Duke faculty guest speakers related to each theme were invited by CIT to lead lunchtime discussions. Fellows were provided with CIT supported laptops for the duration of the week, and Blackboard was actively used by Fellows throughout the week to collect assignments and continue discussions. A [detailed schedule](#) of the Orientation Week is available online.

Evaluation of Orientation Activities

Evaluation Process

CIT collected anonymous daily feedback surveys to gather specific feedback on the topics, activities, and presenters for each day. A more comprehensive questionnaire (also anonymous) was used at the end of the week to assess the Fellows orientation week overall; 11 of 13 Fellows completed this final questionnaire. Each day the Fellows were asked to rate whether the content of each day was interesting and engaging, and whether the topics were relevant to their teaching needs. Additional summative ratings were included on the end of week evaluation form. All these ratings are summarized in the Appendix (page 4). CIT project liaisons individually evaluated each Fellows' project implementation and evaluation plans; receipt of the initial Fellows' program stipend was contingent upon the submission and approval of these project plans. CIT staff also recorded daily observations about the success of the planned activities.

Evaluation Results

Organization and logistics

All Fellows rated the organization and logistics positively with 10 of 11 (91%) being satisfied or very satisfied. Fellow characterized the organization and logistics as "smooth", "perfect", and "well-organized". Several Fellows felt that some days were too full, with the schedule toward the beginning of the week described as "relentless" and "packed", and one commenting that at times there was "too much to be digested".

Expectations of Fellows

The Orientation Week clearly met the expectations of the Fellows, with several (n=6) responding that the Week exceeded their expectations. Fellows characterized their experience as "a fabulous week and a wonderful technological tour" and "well organized and extremely helpful."

"I learned more than I expected to and was stimulated to come up with new ways to improve my courses by introducing technologies..."

Topics and Activities

All Fellows were satisfied with the relevance of the topics to their teaching needs, and all were satisfied (with only one somewhat satisfied) with the diversity of topics and activities. In their overall assessment of topics and activities, Fellows were “pleased”, and two responded that they “wouldn’t change a thing”. Several Fellows singled out the hands-on activities as especially useful.

“I learned an amazing amount and am now able to make informed decisions and choices about selecting appropriate technologies for my classes...”

Suggestions for additional topics and activities to include during follow-up meetings with this group of Fellows included: more hands-on sessions with software tools, ethical issues in teaching, student perspectives on technology, intellectual property issues, and methods and published findings from evaluation and research on effective practices.

Fellows were asked to rank the usefulness of six types of activities during the orientation week. Taken as a group, the three most activities during the week were (in order):

- Hands-on technology sessions
- One-on-one consultations
- Discussions of best practices and uses of particular tools

Three other types of activities were not ranked as highly by the majority of Fellows; however, each of these activities received many positive comments, and in each case at least three Fellows ranked the activity type as one of their top 3.

- Homework assignments
- Discussions about technology’s impact in higher education
- Lunchtime guest speakers

Important Things Learned

Fellows were asked what one or two most important things they learned during the orientation week. Many Fellows cited more in depth knowledge of Blackboard’s features as most important to them. Others cited exposure to new technologies and their application (Flash, Breeze, assessment tools were mentioned). One Fellow commented on the “importance of selecting the right technology to support good teaching practices and student learning experiences instead of focusing on the ‘latest and greatest’ technology.”

“This was a wonderful workshop! I was enormously impressed by the pedagogical, as well as technological knowledge of each of the CIT staff. They are all great teachers. What a fabulous group! Thanks to Lynne O'Brien for hiring them!”

Suggestions for Improvement

Within the daily feedback and summative evaluation questionnaire, and during a final feedback session on Friday, Fellows voiced some suggestions for improving future Fellows orientation week experiences. Some of their suggestions included:

- Concentrating on hands-on demonstrations
- Shortening the days or the overall length of the orientation, and including more breaks
- Covering fewer topics in greater depth
- Bringing in undergraduates to incorporate the student perspective

Appendix: Ratings from Daily and Summative Evaluations

Ratings from Daily Feedback Surveys

Ratings are from a 5 point scale used by respondents

Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

Averages are computed using Strongly Agree = 5 to Strongly Disagree = 1

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Interesting & Engaging	<i>SA,A</i>	17%,83%	58%,33%	36%,36%	33%,56%
	<i>N</i>	0%	0%	27%	11%
	<i>D,SD</i>	0%	8%,0%	0%	0%
	Average	4.2	4.4	4.1	4.2
Relevant to teaching needs	<i>SA,A</i>	42%,58%	67%,25%	36%,36%	33%, 67%
	<i>N</i>	0%	8%	27%	0%
	<i>D,SD</i>	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Average	4.4	4.3	4.1	4.3

Friday Summative Questionnaire (Ratings Items)	
11 of 13 Fellows responding	
How satisfied were you with the structure of the typical day's schedule during Fellows orientation week?	Very Satisfied or Satisfied: 91% Somewhat Satisfied: 9%
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the diversity of topics covered during orientation week.	Very Satisfied or Satisfied: 91% Somewhat Satisfied: 9%
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the relevance of topics to your teaching needs.	Very Satisfied or Satisfied: 100%
I have found it useful to have a laptop during the sessions.	Strongly Agree or Agree: 100%
How effective was the use of the Fellows Blackboard site throughout the orientation week?	Very Effective or Effective: 100%
At this point, would you feel comfortable contacting another Fellow to discuss your project later in the summer or fall?	Definitely 82% Maybe 18% Definitely not 0%