

The Distance

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About the Author

Linda Apps holds an undergraduate degree in Fine Art and a graduate degree in Educational Technology. Her interests lie in multimedia training and communication and the role images play in learning. She presently works as an Instructional Designer for Canadian Pacific Railway.

Collaboration

COLLABORATION

Linda Apps

There is an expectation in our learning and working environments to participate in collaboration. Collaboration is being portrayed as a positive, fulfilling method of production and interaction that should be welcomed and accommodated in all areas and at all levels. In the pursuit of common goals and a shared vision there is the belief that when the expertise of all converges, a whole greater than its individual components will be created.

More is involved in the process of collaboration, however, than simply the physical exchange and consolidation of information. The individual components being pieced together are the participants, the individuals, who ultimately decide how their contribution will be made. As we juxtapose and “collage” information so do we juxtapose and “collage” ourselves. If we attempt to overlook, or by-pass the individual, we lose the very fibre of collaboration. The individual’s experience must be pulled out from under the shadow of the collaborative process.

First it is important to make the distinction between co-operation and collaboration. Many educators and researchers use the terms interchangeably and even purpose that one is not possible without the other. It is suggested that a harmonious, non-competitive atmosphere is necessary for successful collaboration. “The single most important factor in maximizing the excellence of a group’s product was the degree to which the members were able to create a state of internal harmony, which lets them take advantage of the full talent of their members” (Goleman, 1995, p. 161). Wildavsky (1986), writing on the relationship of researchers in collaboration, describes how co-operation and collaboration differ. “Co-operation [is] necessary to get the job done, but different from collaboration because the purpose of collaboration is for ‘the participants to make use of each other’s talents to do what they either could not have done at all or as well alone’ (p. 237). This is the essence of collaborative partnership” (Saltiel, 1998, p. 6). Collaboration can and does take place with or without co-operation. The degree of co-operation may affect the success or failure of the collaboration, but certainly does not act as a prerequisite. ►

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Information

Get Connected. Join ADETA

ADETA is a voluntary, non-profit association of individuals and corporate members interested in distance education and training in Alberta.

Individual Members:

Individual members may participate in all discussions, have one vote on all issues and hold office within the Association.
Annual Individual Membership: \$35.00

Student Members:

Student members may participate in all discussions but do not have a vote and cannot hold office within the Association.
Annual Student Membership: \$10.00

Volunteer Opportunities:

ADETA has short and long term opportunities for you to share or develop your experience in board governance, distance and alternative education research and mentoring, newsletter publication, and a range of committee activities.

To get involved, contact Ingrid Stammer at (403) 319-7245, or ingrid_stammer@cpr.ca.

About this Publication

The Distance is published quarterly by the Public Relations Committee, as a service to members of the Alberta Distance Education & Training Association

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The Editor for this edition of *The Distance* was Ingrid Stammer. The design and typesetting was done by Elbowroom Design.

Adeata Welcomes your comments and suggestions.

Statements, opinions, and points of view expressed by the writers do not necessarily represent those of the officers or members of ADETA.

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From the President

New Century - New Models, New Standards for the Educational Mainstream

In May we will be hearing from a collection of North American Experts, French, Spanish, and English, who will reflect the ideas and trends of their theoretical perspectives and geographical regions. The conference will provide a great opportunity for networking, developing new connections, and a chance to use some "old technology," communicating through the spoken word in a face to face interaction. I am so excited about the opportunity for dialogue and interaction without having to go through email, discussion boards, teleconference, or some other technology.

It seems the more I use technology, the less time I spend talking to people, and the busier I appear to be. I know I spend more and more time at my computer, emailing, doing word processing, checking discussion board and investigating Internet sites. There sense that I am in catch-up mode all the time. There are just not enough hours the day. I need more time to learn more information to understand more software programs to support my work of teaching at a distance. Not to mention that as an educator, I have to stay current in my subject area. I feel more tired. There are aches and pains in my neck and shoulders from too many long hours in front of my laptop (oops, forgot to get up and do exercises every hour as suggested). Overall I am working harder, and not able to maintain balance in my life. Not only am I feeling pressured but I am asking more and more of my students as I try and integrate them into the land of discussion boards, believing this is best for their learning. In the end, the technologies that allow me to feel

connected with students, can leave me feeling dissatisfied and isolated, demanding more of my time. Having said all this, the scary questions for me are; "Am I any more productive than I used to be? Are the students of our learning environments learning more or better than before? Are we any further ahead or are we adding undue "stress" to people and systems? Where are we going at such incredible pace, at what cost, and what are the "real" outcomes?" Answer is; "I am not sure." It is time to stop and smell the roses, put things into perspective, and evaluate where we are.

Perhaps I will find some of the answers at the conference. So come join me, indulge in some good old face to face Socratic Dialogue and discussion.



I am hoping that many of you will be able to take the opportunity to participate in this exciting International conference. **ADETA** is one of the Partners and our members have a special early bird rate. So don't forget to renew your membership if it is coming due soon

Remember if you have any ideas or suggestions we would like to hear from you.

On behalf of the membership, I would like to thank the members of the board for all their hard work. It is such commitment that makes an organization such as ADETA successful.

Announcements

ADETA Nominations and Elections

Nominations are being sought for the position of President and three Board members on the ADETA Board of Directors. The President will be elected to a one-year term, while the Board members will be elected to a two-year term. Two ADETA members may submit the nomination of a member, with a biographical sketch of the nominee to the Chairperson of the Nominating and Elections Committee. Candidates must be members in good standing of the Association, and must be nominated by a member in good standing. Nominations will close April 11, 2002. Candidates and their positions will be posted to ADETA net before the Annual General Meeting. Any remaining vacancies that have not been filled by nominations, may be nominated from the floor at the Annual General Meeting, May 27th in Calgary. Voting will be by secret ballot.

Consider nominating someone, or standing yourself. The experience is rewarding and interesting.

Nominations for the Board of Directors may be sent to the Chairperson of the Nominating and Elections Committee, Pat Fahy.

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ADETA Research Award

As practising distance educators and trainers, many ADETA members have contributions to make to our understanding of the field. In order to support and encourage research and reflection on practice, ADETA has established an annual award for the best research project completed by one of its members. The award consists of a free registration to Interface, and \$150.00 toward the costs of attending. Only ADETA members in good standing, at the time the research is considered, are eligible. The Research Award Selection Committee is chaired by the ADETA past-president.

The criteria for the selection of the winning submission are:

- Relevance to ADETA members.
- Quality and soundness of the research design and implementation.
- Potential impact of the results on the theory or the practice of distance education.

Besides scholarly or theoretical submissions, the award is intended to include other projects that systematically examine, evaluate or reflect upon practice. To be considered, the project should be documented in such a way that the results and findings are accessible to ADETA members and other interested groups. For this reason, longer works such as major papers, theses, dissertations, project reports, etc., must be summarized, in a maximum of 1500 words, before submission for consideration by the Research Award Selection Committee. If the research is already published on-line, the URL should be provided. A synopsis of the winning work will be printed in the ADETA newsletter, based on the summary provided. The work's author is responsible for obtaining copyright clearance for ADETA's use of the material, if necessary.

The deadline for submissions is April 30 annually. Nominations for the Research Award must be made by an ADETA member other than the author of the nominated work. Nominations or questions about the Research Award may be forwarded by mail, fax, or email to Pat Fahy

The Corbetts turn the page; Resign as newsletter editors.

Rod Corbett has served as the ADETA newsletter editor for four years. In that time Rod pulled articles out of the ADETA membership, then compiled, wrote, edited and produced the newsletter. He has taken a paper-based publication and moved it on-line. He had a vision of what ADETA's major communication tool could be, and has set the direction for those editors that will follow.

Helping Rod publish and post the newsletter was Sue Corbett, his wife. Sue brought her creativity to the task when she took content and planned the layout, design, production, and distribution of the newsletter.

Rod and Sue have decided to resign and let a new editor and production manager produce the newsletter.

"I enjoyed doing the newsletter and couldn't have done it without Sue's help," says Rod, "I appreciate everyone's contributions to the newsletter over the four years that I edited it."

Farewell and many heartfelt thanks to Rod and Sue for their valuable contribution to the ADETA newsletter. They have set a standard that will be a challenge to maintain.

Call for Newsletter Editor and Production Manager

Applications are being accepted for the positions of newsletter editor and production manager. The ADETA newsletter is published three times a year in paper and online formats. The paper version is a black and white, 8 ½ X 11 production. The online version appears as PDF and HTML files. Content includes:

- President's Message
- A major article
- News from the ADETA Board of Directors
- Institution Updates
- Announcements of conferences, meetings, and workshops

The editor will gather content from the membership and solicit articles from various resources.

The production manager will handle the design, layout, production, and distribution of the newsletter.

If you are interested in either position please contact Ingrid Stammer at:

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Gulf Canada Square
401 - 9th Avenue SW
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Email: ingrid_stammer@cpr.ca



Conferences and Workshops

ICDE/CADE/ACED North American Conference

The first North American tri-lingual conference on open and distance education will be held in Calgary, Alberta, May 26 – 29, 2002. The conference is sponsored by the International Council for Open and Distance Education and the Canadian association for Distance Education, and is hosted by Athabasca University. Planning of the many aspects of the conference is well under way. Organizing committees are working on the logistics, sponsorship, tradeshow, communication and advertising, as well as the program structure and the selection of papers for presentation at the conference. ADETA will play an important role in the conference as they will present the Pre-conference Workshop and Cracker Barrel Session, Sunday, May 26, 2002. For conference information, deadlines for papers and registration to the conference see: <http://www.athabascau.ca/conf2002/>. Below are two sessions that may be of interest.

A Socratic Dialog on Trends in North American Distance Education.

May 28 at 10:30 a.m.

This session will bring together well-known leaders in open and distance education for an informal guided discussion of the long-term trends in our field that will be the focus of many of the individual papers during the conference. Participants include:

Tony Bates, University of British Columbia, Canada
Michael Offerman, Capella University, USA
Janet Poley,
American Distance Education Consortium, USA
Michel Umbriaco, Tele-Universite, Canada (invited)

The Challenges Ahead

May 29 at 10:30 a.m.

This session will be a moderated dialog about the experience of the conference and about role of distance education in helping North American communities respond to the challenges of the 21st century. Participants include:

Terry Anderson, Athabasca University, Canada
Bruce Chaloux,
Southern Region Education Board, USA
Denise Paquette-Frenette, Brock University, Canada
Michael Moore, Penn State University, USA

International Symposium on Educational Conferencing (ISEC)

Athabasca University's Centre for Distance Education announces an International Symposium on Educational Conferencing (ISEC), May 30 to June 1, 2002, Banff Centre, Banff, Alberta, Canada.

The call for presentations, program information, the Symposium registration form, and a link to accommodations reservations at the Banff Centre, may be found at the ISEC website: <http://cde.athabascau.ca/banff2002/>.

The Symposium will follow the 2002 CADE/ICDE North American Regional Conference, to be held in Calgary May 26 - 29. It is hoped that participants will find it convenient to attend both events.

Hope you can make it! Contact Pat Fahy for more information at:

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Fax: (780) 675-6170

Get Connected: The Educational Technology Summer Institutes

PanCanadian Energy and Mount Royal College are collaborating to sponsor the Fifth Annual Educational Technology Summer Institute, June 17th to 21st, 2002. Get Connected is an innovative and exciting opportunity to explore the use of new technologies in delivering course materials. Participants have the opportunity to build a course module for delivery over the web and share information with other educators.

The Institute features a series of panel forums, workshops, and group discussion. During these sessions you will:

- learn about the relationship between curriculum and educational technology;
- prepare and format content for integration into technology-based tools;
- construct a web-based courseware project;
- discuss issues related to technology integration in teaching and learning with colleagues from post-secondary institutions in Alberta and beyond

Participants should have a basic knowledge of computers and software such as Windows '95, MS Word, and Netscape.

For further information, accommodations and registrations, please contact the Summer Institute Coordinator, Brenda Quantz

E-mail : bquantz@mtroyal.ab.ca

Phone : 403-240-7231.

Or visit the web site at:

www.mtroyal.ab.ca/summer_institute

ADETA Fall Workshop Barrhead - Call for Proposals

Proposals are now being accepted for the ADETA Fall Workshop. This year's theme is "A focus on Teaching and Learning." This workshop will provide an opportunity for practitioners, neophytes and support staff to discuss and share practices, new technologies, opportunities, successes, and problems in delivering distance learning. Workshop sessions will be a minimum of 45 minutes in length. There are opportunities for longer sessions if required. Some computers and labs may be available.

This year the Fall Workshop is being held at the Alberta Distance Learning Centre in Barrhead on October 4.

To submit a proposal please provide the following information:

- Session title
- Session format (presentation, hands-on session)
- Content: In 300 words or less describe the purpose and outline the activities of the workshop
- Session objective
- Media requirements
- Contact Person: Name, address, phone number, e-mail
- Session presenters: Name, address, phone number, e-mail

Please direct all inquiries and proposals to Ingrid Stammer at Ingrid_stammer@cpr.ca.

Deadline for proposals is June 15.

The workshop sessions will be announced June 30 on the ADETA website.



VISIT THE NEW WEBSITE!

www.adeta.org is up and running

news and events, membership information, by-laws, message board and more!

COLLABORATION Continued from page 1

Collaboration is not always comfortable. The dis-ease that people can feel when placed in a situation of working with others can cause a great deal of anxiety. They may be required to brave and perhaps even embrace indeterminable risks and uncertainties. The mere organization of collaboration, following the soundest situational theory, does not ensure anything. It can only set the stage. Unpredictability is germane to any collaboration. The actual passage can never be predetermined.

Elements, such as tension and harmony, or acceptance and resistance, are not separate behaviours to avoid or acquire. They are not conducive to different *types* or *methods* of collaboration, but are continuums that belong to all collaborations.

Although it may be advantageous to have a harmonious co-operative environment, controversy, disagreement and questioning can be aspects employed to shape and clarify collaboration, rather than aspects to be averted. Collaboration is not *limited* to agreement.

In my research, I designed an exercise where the participant's collaborated on a piece of artwork but were unable to use any written or spoken language to communicate. There was no preliminary discussion of design; no clarification of what shape the art piece should accrue. By dislodging the common act of using language to communicate, interactions were redirected. This, in turn, allowed for the possibility of new actions and new events to emerge.

Two elements were important in the design of the study that challenged my understanding and expectations of collaboration. First, by separating the participants' contributions into individual turns, any visible struggles over personally demarcated boundaries were subdued. The entire piece became the property of the participant taking his or her turn. The participant was alone in his or her own vision. How to proceed belonged solely to them. The other participant could not interrupt or interfere. They were left to wait patiently, or impatiently, and observe for an unspecified amount of time until the turn was completed.

Adding, removing, rearranging, layering, are common

acts when creating. Within collaboration, however, such acts may infringe upon and alter another participant's contribution. Any perceived positions of power can dictate responses and actions. It became integral for each participant to suspend judgment of how their acts were being received and interpreted and rise to the challenge of affirming their place within the collaboration.

Second, because there was no discussion concerning the collaboration, the mode of communication amongst the participants was not familiar. Without the boundaries of written and spoken language, the participants were unable to suppress or manage difficulties and misunderstandings in a manner to which they were accustomed. They were unable to use the power of words to manipulate the exercise. The participants were subjugated to either suspending their difficulties or sublimating them through the work of art.



Because the participants couldn't speak and make a definitive decision, concepts that evolved throughout the collaboration grew more and more potent. Removing words rearranged the locus of control. The battles being lost or won were silent ones. There was no verbal feedback to support or direct

their movements. The participants were freed from being praised, questioned or reprimanded for their actions. They could not verbally dictate nor be dictated to. They became solely responsible for nurturing and expressing their own contribution.

The participants had already witnessed each other as artists and colleagues. This familiarity seemed to reinforce a sense of security, a perceived homogeneity based on style and method of working. They sought and found characteristics they believed they jointly possessed. They made associations, created links. They expected certain characteristics to surface and displayed a degree of pleasure when they did - as if they had been reassured.

However, while many expectations were confirmed, even more were broken. What the participants unknowingly could expect from one another, and themselves, was that they would surpass their original expectations. Not knowing from one moment to the next what would

be presented, they were barely unable at times to predict their own actions let alone those of the other participant. Interestingly, most often the result was not fear, disquietude, or distance, but rather anticipation and stimulation.

Some participants viewed the collaboration as an opportunity to relinquish to unpredictability and proceed through it. They commented on the restriction of not being able to use language as a freedom.

Without language they did not feel restricted by the barriers, misunderstandings and control that can be created through language. They became unconcerned with the reaction of the other collaborator and directed their focus to the task at hand. Some saw it as merely an exercise, but not a place where *real* work occurs.

They viewed the collaborative experience only as a resource to feed their individual work.

One group described the process as ritualistic. This was a dynamic, powerful collaboration that was ultimately reflected in the piece of art. The participants commented that they shared an experience that would never have been possible alone. They felt they had explored and birthed a product that surpassed their individual contributions.

In another situation, the dynamics were not nearly as powerful and the participants seemed to accept compromise. Although only one participant made reference to compromising on content, the other participant also compromised by acquiescing, believing he was powerless to alter the situation. A weakened commitment to the content, in turn, caused little, if any, stimuli to be injected into the art piece. The piece displayed limited tension, competition, and challenge and did not resonate with any unity or life of its own.

Collaboration is an ongoing process of negotiation as participants balance delicate relationships that teeter between seeing their own individual ideas come to fruition and possibly compromising for the good of the collaboration. Bruffee believes that we must give something up for the greater good of the collaboration.

“What we learn to give up is always getting to do exactly what we want to do. Or, if we do get to do what we want to do, we may have to give up always doing it in exactly the way we want to do it” (Bruffee, 1995, p. 14). However, a weakened commitment to the content can create a laxness that, in turn, creates little if any stimuli to be injected into the collaboration.

Collaboration is a process. It begins with an idea, a

vision. How it will end is subject to how it proceeds. How the individuals respond to the process will shape it. Collaboration is intensely unique and therefore cannot be duplicated. The direction of collaboration must be found not in the similarities, but in the differences. The understanding of collaboration comes through watching for that which cannot be recreated. To collaborate is to listen, share, exchange, and interrelate. It is also to challenge, question, confront, disagree and possibly fail. It does not always look familiar, pleasant or harmonious. Collaborators must also give serious consideration to the possible drawbacks of collaboration and to the question: Are we willing to weather the unnamed, unforeseen difficulties that are likely to occur? There will be times when collaboration will boost our levels of achievement and other times leave us feeling frustrated and misunderstood. In some cases, it may serve us well to heed Bleich’s advice, “We should always bear in mind that for any one group, working together may not, finally, be the right thing” (Bleich, 1995. p. 44).

To collaborate is to listen, share, exchange, and interrelate. It is also to challenge, question, confront, disagree and possibly fail.

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This article is based on Linda Apps’ thesis “Collaborative Art: A study of a non-verbal collaboration,” completed at the University of Calgary for the Graduate Division of Educational Research specializing in Educational Technology. It does not directly address technology mediated learning, but it does provide thought provoking ideas for those developing collaborative activities for

distance delivery. Students trying to work collaboratively at a distance can expect to encounter problems comparable to the research subjects.

Multimedia Workplace Learning: Certificate in Adult Learning Program

MULTIMEDIA WORKPLACE LEARNING Marleny Munoz

The Multimedia Workplace Learning project involved a process of revision, transformation, piloting and evaluation of core and elective courses in the Certificate in Adult Learning (CAL) at the University of Calgary between 1997-2001. The project was intended to make CAL more accessible and flexible through delivery via audioconferencing, videoconferencing as well as synchronous and asynchronous on-line formats.

Using a case study method, the CAL program was evaluated from the perspective of the following stakeholders: administrators, instructors, instructional designers, learners and corporate stakeholders.

The study sought to answer the following questions:

- How did the specific initiative and different stakeholders define continuing professional development ?
- What is the continuing professional development context for the different stakeholders?
- How did the initiative and different stakeholders define learning technology initiatives (LTI)?
- What is the LTI context within the organization?
- Taking the LTI's context into account, how does it fit with Roger's Diffusion Theory Model?
- What was the perceived success of the LTI?
- Has the LTI changed perceptions of learning technologies and if so, how?
- Given what has been learned, how might similar initiatives be done differently in the future?



Stakeholders defined continuing professional development as lifelong learning. The program was directed at adult learners who were working full-time, thus the various learning technologies enabled them to participate when they might otherwise be unable. In addition to content, learners commented on the opportunity to use on-line technologies to improve their technical skills.

Students and instructors defined learning technologies as anything that facilitates learning. This included instruments, processes, techniques and even the instructors themselves. Instructors and administrators were more specific in their definition saying that learning technologies are an electronic instruments or communication medium for delivering learning.

Within the University of Calgary, the Learning Commons is the unit responsible for multimedia development. Each instructor in the CAL program worked with Learning Commons staff to redesign their courses. Their reasons for wanting to adopt learning technologies, or in the case of students, use learning technologies, varied from accessibility to personal interest in exploring new ways of teaching and learning.

In terms of diffusion theory, the learning technologies used increased the opportunity for more learners to participate in the program. The roles of instructors and learners changed as learners began to accept more responsibility for their own learning. The on-line format assisted in meeting the needs of learners with different learning styles. As disadvantages, learners listed lack of personal contact, relationships, communication, and dialogue as well as the cost of the technology.

The success of the initiative was measured by the success of the learners, the adoption of innovations, number of learners enrolled and the use of another approach to learning. The impact of CAL on students and instructors was reflected in their workplace in the power they felt when they became more aware of the benefits of learning, in accessing new opportunities, in self-discovery and in learning about technologies.

Future initiatives of this type should focus on strategies and technologies for building relationships among students and instructors, providing more on-line resources and the inclusion of evaluation as part of the design.

For more information about this study, please contact Dr. Timothy Pyrch at the University of Calgary at pyrch@ucalgary.ca.

Facing the Future with Video Conferencing

VIDEO CONFERENCING

Keith Kozak

Video Conferencing has been in existence since the mid 1970's. The technology and the industry have changed dramatically since that time. For many years it was necessary to operate on high bandwidth at high operating expenses, there were no industry standards and units were so expensive that only large companies and government agencies could afford them. The situation today is quite different. Systems and networks are globally available at affordable prices, standards guarantee interoperability, picture and audio quality is excellent, and software upgradeable systems ensure low maintenance costs and protect the technology investment. Systems today are easy to use with a wide range of features. Functions may include embedded multisite with audio conferencing, easy PC connectivity, and interactive presentation possibilities such as Duo Video. The convergence of two separate worlds, ISDN and IP has created market uncertainty as to network choice. This dilemma has been bridged by offering systems that allow both network capabilities to be mixed simultaneously, creating unparalleled network flexibility. Another aspect of network flexibility is the ability to provide wireless solutions such as the TANDBERG 1000 and 880 desktop video conferencing units.

Today with the evolution and availability of cost effective networks and systems, companies and institutions are using videoconferencing in many ways. Some of the applications of video conferencing are being used in manufacturing, to allow all parties to collaborate, speed up information gathering, reduce time to market, while allowing for instant feedback and increased customer satisfaction. Marketing activities can increase the speed of approval processes and turnaround time by allowing input from a variety of locations. Education and training can be delivered to people in remote locations. This enables greater participation with no incremental costs.

It is important to identify the best solutions for your requirements. There are different categories of

videoconferencing systems and it is crucial to understand the limitations and benefits of each.

A review of the available systems and applications, will help you decide which system is best suited to meet your needs. Keys to successful implementation of a videoconferencing system are reliability, quality, and ease of use. Customer feedback indicates the most important attribute is a system that works every time, based on the highest implementation of the standards with a high mean time between failure, and a system that is extremely easy to use. The true value to a customer of any system is one that is standards based for worldwide interoperability, non proprietary, feature rich, software upgradeable and systems that are optimized for both high and low bandwidths.

There is a full line of standards-based videoconferencing products that range from solutions for executive applications to small, medium and large group applications. Systems can offer feature-rich core technologies that guarantee the highest video and audio quality and deliver unparalleled ease-of-use and reliability. Systems are available for business applications, as well as application-specific solutions for high-growth markets such as distance learning and telemedicine.

For more information on videoconferencing products check www.tanberg.net, or contact Keith Kozak at kkozak@tanberg.ca.

Updates from the Field



Grant MacEwan College Update

Grant MacEwan College places great emphasis on providing quality learning opportunities that enable students to stretch their intellectual capacities and to receive practical, hands-on training. Thus, the institution continues to expand its use of technology, both as a means to enhance or support traditional classroom delivery and as a means to deliver on-line courses. This activity will receive a further boost later in the year when a number of recommendations being discussed by the college's new Technology Committee are implemented. The recently formed committee is chaired by Dr. Janet Paterson-Weir, Vice President, Academic. The Technology Committee comprises of a steering committee and the following subcommittees: Instructional Technology, Technical Operations, Organizational Resource Management, User Services, and Management Information Systems.

During the last year, significant growth has occurred in the use of WebCT and computer-managed learning (CML/TLM) in on- and off-campus course delivery. In January 2002 there were 273 WebCT faculty accounts and 5,317 student accounts, 290 WebCT courses were actively being used, and 230 WebCT courses were dormant, contained archived material, or were under development. The number of WebCT student accounts is expected to double next year, a significant growth given that this software was installed only 2.5 years ago. Approximately 2,730 students take CML-based courses.

In addition to WebCT, courses are delivered via audioconferencing four evenings per week and on Saturday mornings, videoconferencing is used four days and two evenings each week, and print-based courses continue to be developed. All these activities are sup-



Video Conferencing is used at Grant MacEwan College to reach students in smaller communities

ported by Instructional Media and Design personnel, who are actively involved in their design, development, and/or implementation.

Highlighted below are a few of the technology-related projects with which the Instructional Media and Design Department is assisting.

Rural Nursing Videoconferencing.

This year, Edna Berg coordinates the delivery of anatomy, physiology, and nursing practice courses via videoconferencing to students in Drayton Valley, Hinton, and Wainwright. The instructors, Bev Kenney, Pat Picketts, Shelley Buckley, and Sarin Azer, have found that by using the College's Polycom videoconferencing system with a built-in bridge, they are able to interact with students in several distant locations at the same time. In addition, the H.323 compliant Polycom FX system supports streaming video over the Internet and allows audioconferencing calls to be made simultaneously to additional sites such as Bonnyville. The videoconferencing system is also used by Nancy Roberts in the Learning Skills Centre to help nursing students with their study, reading, and writing skills and by personnel in the Registrar's Office to respond to student concerns and formal appeals.

Human Resources Videoconferencing.

Don Schepens and Rob Gawreluck use videoconferencing to allow the college to have presence in four smaller communities that individually would not have had enough students to justify offering the Human Resources program. In addition, this technology allows students to interact with guest speakers who are at a distance and to communicate with each other for purposes such as practising labour negotiation, which otherwise would have been a theoretical exercise. Gary Reddom, who manages the Polycom and PictureTel videoconferencing systems at MacEwan, states that the technology is effective providing that the telecommunication lines between the smaller communities are operating at their optimum. MacEwan would like to reduce operating costs by offering videoconferencing to these sites over the Internet. However, the Internet bandwidth available at many smaller centres in Alberta is currently inadequate to yield quality images at the receiving end of the transmission. As video compression algorithms become more advanced, it may soon be possible to receive quality video images that have been sent over telecommunication channels with limited bandwidth.

Health and Community Studies Audioconferencing.

Ev Simpson, Lynne Baker, and Randy Poltaruk coordinate the delivery of a number of courses in programs such as Child and Youth Care, Correctional Services, Human Services Administration, and Rehabilitation Practitioner. Many of the materials used in these courses were reviewed and edited by Judith Johnson in Instructional Media and Design. Since Grant MacEwan College has an automated 22-line audioconferencing bridge, it is possible for students spread over a large geographical area to interact with their instructors and other students.

Accounting Laptop Project.

Since 1999, Lynn Sugden and Sharon Ramstad have promoted the use of student laptops at the college. Currently, students in the Accounting Program purchase their own laptop computers that are connected to the college's wireless network. Since the course materials and exercises used in the laptop version of the Accounting Program are online, it also has been possible to offer the Accounting Program to students in locations such as Fort McMurray and Winnipeg. Both students and faculty have embraced the use of laptops in the program, and no major student or faculty issues have arisen. Mark Arnison plans to employ laptops in management courses and Lynn Sugden will use laptops in the Supply Chain Management Program.

Legal Assistant Video and Website.

Elsie Elford and Travis Huckell in the Legal Assistant

Program worked closely with Eric Rice at Learning and Skills Television (ACCESS TV) to develop a series of videos depicting legal situations that many small businesses face. A website is being developed by Jillianne Code and Derick Walsh to support the videos and to provide small-business owners with access to up-to-date information and opportunities to chat online with others who have similar interests and concerns.

Early Childhood Development Video.

Dr. Sherrill Brown and Carole Massing in the Early Childhood Development Program and Richard Day in Instructional Media and Design produced *Supervising with Style*. This four-part video focuses on the supervision of a student during her practicum at a daycare centre. Faculty at Grande Prairie Regional College and Lakeland College contributed to the content of the video. Today, it seems that everyone wants to place program content online. However, the content of this video is aimed not only at Early Childhood Development Program personnel, but also at those who work in daycare centres and supervise practicum students. Not all daycares in the province have Internet connections and if they do, their bandwidth cannot handle streaming video effectively.

Psychology WebCT Discussions.

Dr. Andrew Howell uses the WebCT discussion tool with students in his psychology classes. Students in the Research Methods in Psychology course submit brief summaries of their research and generate several critical issues arising from the research. Students are asked to read and comment on ideas posted by other students. Later in class, research articles are discussed as well as the issues arising from them. A similar procedure is used in the Skill Acquisition and Performance course. All Psychology 104 and 105 students have access to a publisher-provided WebCT site that accompanies the course textbook. The use of the site was facilitated by Instructional Media and Design and Computing and Network Services personnel, who streamlined the process for allowing large number of students to access various WebCT tools within a short timeframe.

Arts and Science CML.

Gerri Nakonechny in Health and Community Studies brought CML to Grant MacEwan College in 1982. CML continues to be used to deliver nurse refresher or credentialing courses both on-campus and at distance sites such as Calgary, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, and Vancouver. The Business and Performing, Visual and Communication Arts divisions subsequently employed CML to offer on-campus inde-

pendent study courses, followed by Arts and Science. Dr. Russ Powell significantly increased the number of students in CML courses by supervising the development of CML-based courses in Anthropology 101 and 219; Economics 102; History 201 and 261; Latin 101 and 102; Philosophy 120; Political Science 101 and 102; Psychology 104, 105, and 281; and Sociology 100, 225, and 241. With the assistance of Erwin Veugelers in Instructional Media and Design, the Arts and Science Division plans to offer independent study CML-based courses to locations outside the college and the Business Division plans to deliver CML-based courses to sites in the Yellowhead Regional Consortium.

Arts and Cultural Management Online.

Rose Ginther, Denise Roy, and Raina Rudko-Buac are converting the Arts and Cultural Management Program to an online format. This format is ideally suited for those in the arts and cultural management community whose time is at a premium and who may live in smaller centres where access to this type of training is not available. Jillianne Code, instructional designer, and Kitty Ng, graphic artist, are working with faculty to ensure that the online courses meet the needs of instructors and students.

WebCT and Online Help.

In an effort to assist faculty to use WebCT and convert courses to an online format, Instructional Media and Design offers 5 to 20 workshops per month, technology workshops tailored to specific academic programs, one-on-one consultations, and a variety of services such as instructional design, editorial services, graphics, photography, multimedia development, video production, and satellite downlinking services. Faculty can also participate in technology forums and a teaching and learning with technology showcase, use a WebCT listserv, and access an online *Faculty Guide to Online Learning* developed by Val Stewart, who also facilitates numerous Web-related workshops.

Learn Online, a project initiated by Health and Community Studies, continues to develop online distance courses in the Bachelor of Applied Human Service Administration, Hearing Aid Practitioner, Nursing, Occupational Health Nursing, and Social Work programs. Learn Online is also participating in externally funded research projects to examine issues faced by faculty and students involved in online distance education.

The projects outlined above represent just a few of the activities that are contributing to the positive learning environment within Grant MacEwan College. Over the next two years, the college plans to provide additional

learning and student support services with the use of technology. We fully recognize the need to offer students as many services as possible over the Web and to provide appropriate online learning opportunities.

To obtain additional information about educational technology applications at MacEwan contact Clayton R. Wright via e-mail at wrightc@admin.gmcc.ab.ca or by telephone at (780) 497-5286.



Mount Royal College

Academic Development Centre

The winter semester has been very active for the Academic Development Centre at Mount Royal College with a substantial increase in the use of learning technologies by students and instructors.

Distributed Learning Centre

Mount Royal College is now part of the Netera Alliance and Alberta Video Classroom Network. This high speed connectivity has allowed for the College's Conservatory to take part in the National Arts Centre Young Artists Program, which pairs world renowned music instructors with local students. This summer's program featured Pinchas Zukerman, National Arts Centre Orchestra Director and an exemplary musician. Zukerman taught a master class, which included two young artists from Ottawa and one Morningside Music Bridge student from Mount Royal, via video conferencing.

Currently the College is hosting a Netera Alliance Speakers series which consists of bi-weekly presentations by Alliance users. The list of speakers includes; Doug Macleod, Project Manager of Broadband Enabled Lifelong Learning Environments (BELLE Project), Dr Craig Montgomerie from the University of Alberta and Dr Richard Levy of the University of Calgary.

Technology Training

Recent trends that have become apparent in our technology training support area are as follows:

- 1) The number of instructors receiving drop-in support has increased while the number of instructors attending workshops has declined.
- 2) Instructors are staying for shorter periods for drop-in support (just-in-time needs).
- 3) The focus of workshops has shifted from technology training to the use and creation of digital learning objects.

Student Technicians and Resource Tutor (START) Program

The START Program puts skilled Mount Royal students to work providing technology support for faculty, staff and other students. This program has exploded and now provides vital support for the use of learning technologies at the College. Several areas that START students are currently providing support include:

- 1) Library Services - 'runners' for classroom technology equipment (delivery, set-up and take down of laptops, VCRs and VPU's for instructors)
- 2) Class Orientation Sessions to Learning Technologies - supporting instructors who are providing Blackboard, course web site, PowerPoint, Excel or other application orientation workshops for their students
- 3) Drop-In and Workshop Support for Students - Similar to the instructor, technology training trend, the demand for one-on-one student support has grown while the number of students attending workshops has declined.

Instructional Technology Projects

The focus of the instructional technology projects at the College has begun to shift during the past year. Development work now involves not just single courses but entire programs. An example of this shift is evident in the College's *Children's Mental Health Certificate* program. This program will be offered entirely on-line.

More information can be found at <http://www.wacad.mtroyal.ab.ca/adc/cmhi/>

Another shift is reflected in the *Course Adaptability* projects. The goal of these projects is to increase the flexibility of course delivery through the application of learning technologies. The use of technology in these course 'hybrids' has allowed instructors to support weekend delivery of courses, reduce class contact hours and include blocks of independent study within the semester. For further information check <http://www.mtroyal.ab.ca/programs/academserv/ADC/courseadapt.htm>

Blackboard - Course Management System

The use of the *Blackboard - Course Management System* at the College continues to grow. Current statistics

indicate that there are 615 courses, 471 instructors and 11,591 students actively using the system. The majority of the *Blackboard* sites are used to support classroom based courses at the College but there is also a growing number of sites which are being used to support our course hybrid and distance courses.

The number of public and private institutions using *Blackboard*, in the City of Calgary, has also grown and recently a Calgary Blackboard (eLearning) Users Group has been created. The purpose of this Users Group is to share information and ideas about the educational use of the *Blackboard* system. Current members of this User Group include; Faculty of Social Work - University of Calgary, DeVry Institute of Technology, Calgary Academy, Canadian Pacific Railway, Bank of Montreal and Mount Royal College.

More information about these and other learning technology initiatives at Mount Royal College can be found through the Academic Development Centre's web site: <http://www.mtroyal.ab.ca/adc/>

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THE NORTHERN ALBERTA
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Canadian Students put Wireless Learning to the Test!

For the first time in Canada, a consortium of post-secondary institutions and companies from the educational publishing and technology sectors have signed a contract to launch a Mobile Learning pilot program at two Canadian institutions during the 2002 fall semester. Students at Seneca College in Ontario and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) will pilot the program that will provide insight about the educational benefits of wireless handheld technology for students.

First-year students at NAIT and Seneca College enrolled in general accounting will receive access to curriculum materials through a wireless enabled device.

What originally began as a partnership between publisher McGraw-Hill Ryerson and Bell Mobility, has grown into the Mobile Learning consortium. The consortium includes NAIT, Seneca College, and companies such as Cap Gemini Ernst & Young (CGE&Y), Blackboard, Compaq, and Avaya.

Wireless learning is not new to higher education, but never before has the technology been so thoroughly integrated into various aspects of a college course. From registration to homework assignments and from communicating with the instructor to end-of-course exams, the Mobile Learning pilot will help students access their class resources through a wireless enabled device. During the pilot, network time will be provided at no charge to the student participants. The announcement of February 26, 2002, was further enhanced by integrating videoconference to main partners and providing a webcast of the event to all involved. Please visit the webcast site at < www.nait.ab.ca > and look for mobile learning annc.

New Professional Development Program Available

In January, 2002 NAIT launched ALIVE On-line, a comprehensive professional development program aimed at developing effective on-line instructors. Based on a validation process involving seasoned on-line instructors from several countries, we have developed an outcomes-based Certificate program called ALIVE On-line. ALIVE is an acronym (**A**ctive **L**earning in **V**irtual **E**nvironments) for a program that lives up to its name. The entire program is offered on-line with no requirement for onsite visits.

Response to this certificate program has been extremely positive. The first cohort was filled in two days resulting in a second offering in February that was also full. Due to this overwhelming response the need for more offerings is evident. NAIT is now advertising a third offering to commence on April 1, 2002.

Participants may individualize their program by choosing from 7 different levels or they may pursue the completion of six levels and a capstone exercise to obtain a Certificate in on-line instruction. Details of the program can be found at www.nait.ab.ca/alive. It is our hope that the web site will answer most questions. However, ALIVE welcomes any inquiries related to the

offering of this exciting program. Please feel free to contact them at Alive@nait.ab.ca. or billi@nait.ab.ca.

Some Comments from Participants

"I wanted you to know that I am gleaning tons of information from this course, and have recommended it for several others in my office."

"I am really appreciating the course up to this point, meaning I really value the underlying philosophy that is guiding the course content and process."

"This course has some excellent resources to assist us with classroom and distributed learning pedagogy."

"The Level 1 course is very interesting and challenging. It has helped me to put my thoughts in perspective with regards to on-line learning/teaching."

"You are doing a very good job of facilitating the course."



Northern Lakes College

New Frontiers for Distance Learning in Northern Alberta

Northern Lakes College has purchased a 60-user **CentraOne** licence for synchronous course delivery via the internet! The purchase capped a six-month process of scrutinizing various software packages. Andy Asselin and Val Marshall effectively presented our preference for **CentraOne** to the Senior Management Team in October 2001. Andy would like to take this opportunity to thank the people at various educational institutes for their input during the selection process. The various departments using synchronous distance delivery have now breathed a sigh of relief and are incorporating the new software into the college. Support and infrastructure will continue to be the cornerstone of our success; currently we are installing equipment, promoting the program and training staff.

At the moment, NLC does an amazing job with it's antique collection of telewriters, fickle modems and

other aging accessories that require brain surgeons to repair them. NLC had hoped to build a wireless network to facilitate distance delivery, but the global earthquake in the fortunes of tech companies scuttled the project, as our key partner was unable to come through. The transition to *CentraOne* will therefore be gradual, and full implementation will take place after the government Supernet is operational in north central Alberta in 2004. Until that time, the college will operate the low-bandwidth features of *CentraOne* in a two-line system with traditional audio conferencing. Nonetheless, our various experiments with voice over IP have been successful.

CentraOne is proving to be a highly capable program in a low-bandwidth environment.

We have started two pilot programs with *CentraOne* since the first of the year. Business Administration is offered to sixteen students in Slave Lake, Smoky River and Grouard. The Distance Learning High School is using *CentraOne* to offer two group courses and individual math tutoring to students in eight communities. Students are excited about participating. The pilots are a daunting, yet very enjoyable, exploration. The main challenge is to utilize the program as fully as possible without encountering problems due to low bandwidth.

DSL Internet service from Telus has finally reached one community in our service region. This high-speed service made it possible to begin operating the *CentraOne* server at Slave Lake campus. Only the Supernet will provide the widespread access that we need to be fully operational, but the Slave Lake connection is a good start.

In preparation for Supernet, NLC is in the process of installing infrastructure for voice and data at each of its two dozen campuses. Originally purchased for the wireless initiative, Nortel Networks, "Business Communication Managers (BCM)" are a key component of this upgrade.

The BCM can function as a traditional telephone switch, or use Voice over Internet Protocol. It also provides automated attendant capabilities, unified messaging, and H.323 connectivity for videoconferencing.

Distance delivery of courses at NLC is ever expanding. In the post-secondary arena, distance delivery is an essential component of Business Administration, Licensed Practical Nurse, University Studies, and Power Engineering. A new Teacher Assistant Program will depend on distance delivery to create flexibility for the student (see the accompanying article by Shelley Wilkinson). Northern Lakes College, which now has

campuses in Fort Vermilion and Paddle Prairie, endeavors to fulfil its mission of providing high quality and accessible courses to learners throughout its huge service area.

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Northern Lakes College Teacher Assistant Certificate Program

Northern Lakes College and Grant MacEwan College have formed a partnership to offer a flexible, accessible Teacher Assistant Program. This program is unique because of the model of delivery, the recognition of prior learning for students who are in the workplace, and the inclusion of culturally relevant content.

The Teacher Assistant Program is a certificate program offered on a part-time basis and is designed to support learners in multiple communities. Classes run one or two evenings a week and some weekends. This format allows people already working in the field to access the program. Instruction includes a mix of delivery strategies including traditional classroom seminars, self-directed study materials, teleconferencing, and tutor support. There are also two supervised student work placements.

One of the many benefits of accessing the Teacher Assistant program is its flexibility. Because it is not necessary to take courses in sequence, this allows participants to enter and leave the program cycle as required. Also, there is opportunity for transfer of 15 credits to a degree program.

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SAIT's Networked Learning Council

One of the recommendations arising last spring from SAIT's *Planning our Virtual Space* sessions was to establish teams to develop and guide virtual space priorities. One such team is the Networked Learning Council. Its lead constituents are representatives from the Centre for Learning, along with academic coordinators, a representative from Business Development and International Training and a Networked Learning librarian. As a coordinating body, its task is to draw together ideas and initiatives of SAIT Networked Learning practitioners and to recognize, promote and share best practices to foster their wider application at the Institute.

For the Networked Learning Council, the crux of the matter for NL was to assure that there would be both student support and faculty support. The Council was fully aware that in some quarters at SAIT learning through virtual space seemed exotic and avant-garde. But it also affirmed that NL requires the same practical solutions for admittance, access, study and completion as traditional education does.

To achieve these the Networked Learning Council incorporated a Networked Learning Service Model (page 19) as part of its development process. The service model is still a work in progress, but briefly, these are some of its elements that are providing equitable student support in Networked Learning.

Information Website

There are certain operations that are the mechanics of education and they apply in both traditional and virtual space learning. These include procedures such as the financial and administrative systems that, for example, allow students to register for or withdraw from courses, apply for financial aid, pay tuition fees and order transcripts. These operations also involve the initial distribution of materials to prospective students.

Learning Portal

Once applicants have registered, they enter SAIT's virtual campus through our learning portal. At SAIT, the channel by which information is privately transmitted to them is the Campus Pipeline—a Web platform that

brings together administrative applications, student support, curriculum and a link to our learning management system to create a one-stop shop for students, faculty, administrators and alumni.

Learning Management Team

In Networked Learning the learning support is provided by a team consisting of instructors, tutors, a system technician, a student services representative, SAIT Library staff facilitating access and assistance for research projects, and project leaders for business and industry clients.

Most of SAIT's Networked Learning courses are currently provided in a blended delivery mode that includes print materials, audio, video and audio-graphic conferencing, and CD-ROMs, and the Pipeline application provides enhanced teaching and learning tools, such as online faculty hours, research, study groups, courseware submission, threaded discussions and course-specific chats.

Data Management System

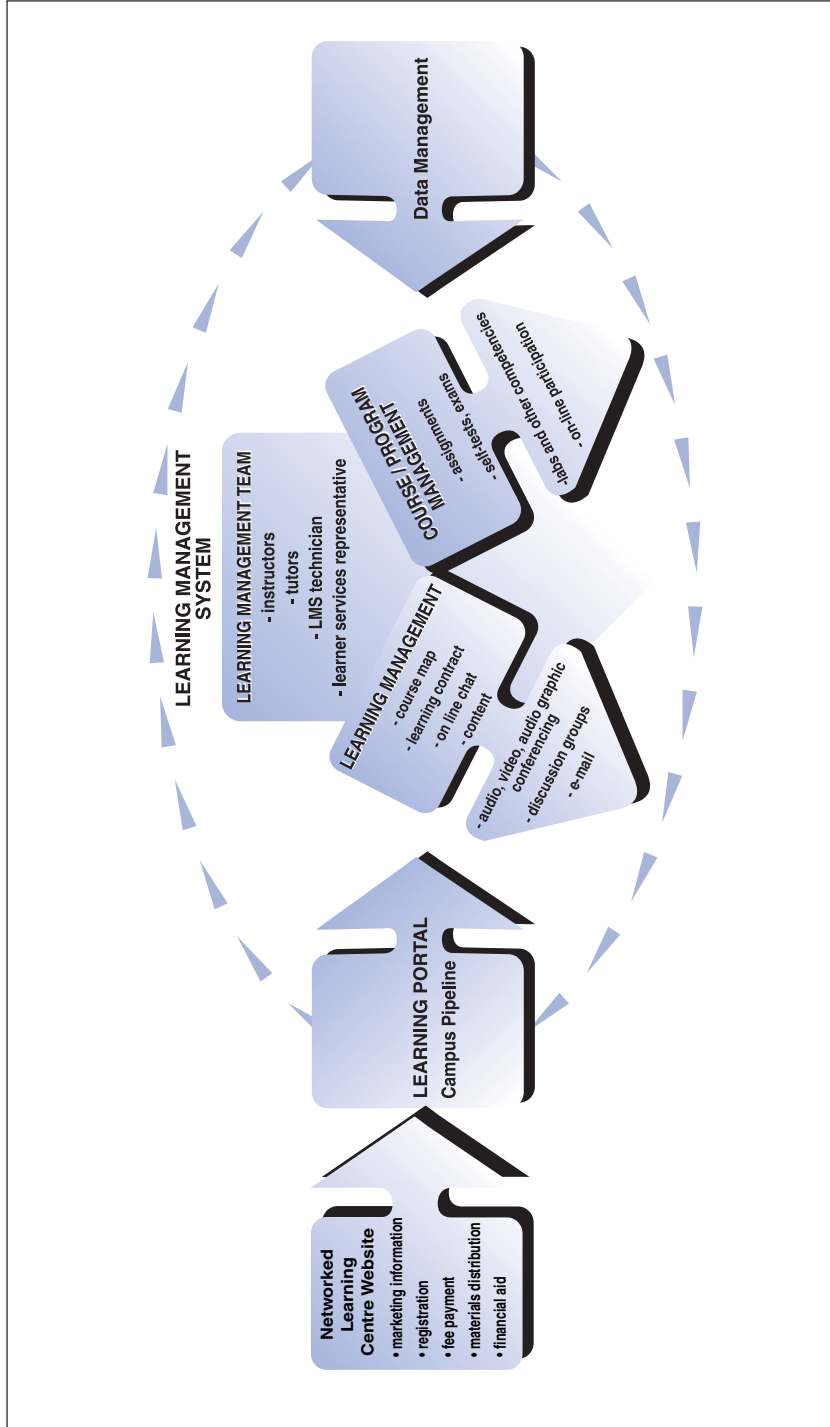
Information is available at a distance to students, and to their advisors and proctors, as much as it is if they were on-campus students. Student records, documentation and profiles, information retrieval and FAQs are all accessible.

From the recommendations of the White Paper of the Symposium on Virtual Space the Networked Learning Council was given the task of coordinating an effective Networked Learning delivery model for SAIT. During the past year the Council was repeatedly reminded that learning via virtual space does not necessarily offer the Institute a magic wand. Instead, there are strict methodologies and practical matters involving people, content and technology that forever need to be addressed. Finding solutions, providing equitable advantages for learners, and ultimately implementing a systematic and efficacious approach for this delivery model are the responsibilities of SAIT's Networked Learning Council.

For further information:

NL e-mail: judy.adams@sait.ab.ca

SAIT Website: www.sait.ab.ca/de



The Networked Learning Service Model, a part of the Networked Learning Council's development process



