Training Faculty to Work in Multi-Media: A Report of a Workshop at Pacific University

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INTRODUCTION

Pacific University is a small, private liberal arts university in Forest Grove, Oregon.

Over a period of time, it has developed an extensive set of graduate programs, primarily in the health professions, which presently includes Optometry, Clinical Psychology, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physician’s Assistants and a Graduate School of Education.

Because of the specialized nature of many of the graduate programs, individual schools often felt themselves as unique and separate from the university and other graduate programs.

Three years ago, Pacific University received a grant from the Hewlett Foundation to fund programs that crossed the traditional boundaries among the various academic disciplines.

Through programs developed under these grants, faculty members from different academic areas began working together and began to find that we had much more in common with our
colleagues in other schools than we thought. One grant looked at how we approached ethical issues in each of our programs and we found that we all had very similar dilemmas. Another group looked at problem-based learning and how it could be implemented in teaching a variety of courses.

A special interest that I had was in using computer technology to enhance the learning process for students. I was aware of a few faculty members in widely separate disciplines at Pacific University who had developed expertise in various aspects of computer technology. I felt that this was another example of ideas from a specialized area that could be used in most disciplines.

I contacted several individual with special experience and training and we developed a proposal for the Hewlett Grant that would allow faculty and staff from across the academic spectrum to meet together to be exposed to and learn digital technologies that can enhance the academic experience in a wide variety of programs.

A group of six faculty and staff members developed a 5 phase program to disseminate information about digital technology to the faculty staff and students at Pacific University.

**OUR TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM**

**Phase 1** consisted of the six individuals developing a course that would cover the basics of digital technology such as how to create a web page, how to get digital pictures, how to create digital video clips and sound clips and how to create interactive web pages and publish them to the web. We planned the course to be held 1 hour per week during lunch periods during the Spring Semester of 2001. We wanted to present the program to as wide an audience as possible and to stimulate interest in the project. To achieve this, we invited the entire faculty to a “free lunch” the first week of the semester. During the luncheon, the five members of our group demonstrated our present uses of digital technology in our classrooms. At the end of the presentation, we asked for volunteers to sign up for our free weekly course. Those who signed up would receive free software and a digital scanner. Our course was to be “hands on” so we had to limit our initial course size to 17 members. Our luncheon was a success and we had 40 (1/3 of the entire faculty) come. Seventy-five percent of those who attended the luncheon wished to attend the class! Those who wished to attend the class placed their names in a container and we drew names from containers representing the major academic programs so that we would have representation from across campus.

**Weeks 2 & 3** we started with Mark Bailey, PhD, from the Graduate School of Education. His presentations were on active learning with examples of how we can use computer technology to increase active learning with our students. [Click here to visit his web site](http://bcis.pacificu.edu/interface/?p=2244).

**Week 4,** Ken Bush, PhD from the School of Physical Therapy demonstrated how to create simple Web sites using Microsoft Word. [Click here to see writing aids for his graduate students](http://bcis.pacificu.edu/interface/?p=2244)
Week 5, Ken Bush demonstrated how to create interactive programs using Microsoft PowerPoint. Click here to see an interactive site at the University of California, Davis that demonstrates the possibilities for learning clinical skills.

Weeks 6 & 7, Jeffrey Barlow, PhD, from the History Department taught the faculty how to use Adobe GOLIVE to create and publish Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) documents to the web. To see how Dr. Barlow uses a web site to engage his history students, click here:

Weeks 8-10, Collin Ensminger-Stapp helped faculty learn how to use WebCT to create integrated courses on the web that included syllabi, calendars, chat rooms and directed E-mail. He also introduced the topic of testing on the Internet. To access WebCT at Pacific University, click here.

Weeks 11 & 12 Mike Geraci, Media Arts Department, demonstrated scanning, digital photography and manipulation of digital photographs using Adobe Photoshop. He also demonstrated the creation of sound clips.

Weeks 13 & 14 Bob Yolton, PhD, College of Optometry demonstrated the use of video in digital presentations. He introduced digital video and video clip production through the use of Imovie software. To See Dr. Yolton’s courses, you will need to use WebCT. Use the words student and student for your user name and password. Dr. Yolton’s courses are OPT 757, OPT 791 & Optometry Development. To see Dr. Yolton’s syllabi and programs, click here.

Week 15 was reserved for putting it all together and publishing contents to the web with the use of WS-FTP software for IBM users and FETCH software for MAC users.

Phase 3

Because we were unable to accommodate all of the faculty, staff and students who wished to participate in our project, we were prepared to convert the contents of our live course to an asynchronous course that could be used by anyone at Pacific University.

We created detailed instructions, photos and video clips to demonstrate the procedures that had been discussed. As part of the grant, we bought space on a server to allow us to present tutorials on the various topics that had been covered.

Phase 4 is to consist of the evaluation portion of the course. All participants in the course were asked to complete a pre-course and after-course survey to determine their prior and after course level of expertise and interest in the various internet technologies. We will also be monitoring the level of use of these technologies in the courses and also be monitoring the level of use of the internet version of the project.

Phase 5 is the final portion of the project and is dissemination of the information gained from the
course. In October, 2001, the participants in the project will deliver an hour presentation to the faculty at Pacific University to share our experiences and the lessons that we learned. Additionally, Ken Bush will give a 45 minute presentation, entitled “A Plan For Faculty Development In The Use Of Technology”, at the 2001 National Conference of Computers on Campus in November 2001.

Lessons Learned

1. Faculty members are developing an interest in using computer technology in teaching. Three years ago, there was little interest in computer technology. We were initially concerned that there would not be enough faculty to fill the class. We were extremely happy to see the enthusiasm for the course that we did.

2. Have the infrastructure in place to support the faculty when they become more technologically savvy. We were fortunate in having a well developed campus Information Technology Section, but we found it sometimes difficult to find a 20 person computer lab available with all the software that we needed and having 17 students simultaneously downloading large video clips could strain the system. Additional faculty use will require additional Information Technology support and it must be planned for in advance.

3. Faculty appear to be more willing to listen to other faculty than to outside technology experts. Our university had periodically given specific technology classes and they were not attended as well as ours. It appears that seeing someone use technology in a situation similar to yours is more motivating than seeing the technology by itself.

4. If possible, teach one class to MacIntosh users and a separate class to Windows users.

In spite of the attempt by major software producers such as Microsoft to make software look the same for the two types of systems, there are small and subtle differences that can be difficult for students. Little things like “how do you right click the mouse on a MAC?” can slow down the presentation and get half of the class lost. Also, there are several pieces of software that don’t have direct analogs for MAC and WINDOWS. Imovie only runs on MACS. Windows users must learn a totally different piece of software such as Videowave. Windows users have one set of software to load programs to the internet and MAC users have another. If possible, it would be better to teach a separate class for each system.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to the Hewlett Foundation for their generous grant to Pacific University and for their forethought in directing the grant to bring about an interaction between the various academic bodies on campus. Through this program there has been a large and positive change in how we all relate to each other and in how we interact with our students.
RESOURCES

- Hewlett Foundation
- Pacific University
- Jeffrey Barlow, PhD
- Mark Bailey, PhD
- Ken Bush, PhD
- Colin Ensminger-Stapp
- Michael Geraci
- Robert Yolton, PhD

For Information on the Contributors...

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