

# **A Collaborative Approach to Faculty Development**

**EDUCAUSE 2004 Poster Session**

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As the use of instructional technology tools continues to proliferate throughout the University's faculty ranks, it is more important than ever for faculty to develop skills in the technical operations and the pedagogically-sound application of those tools. However, as faculty constantly face new technology, experience busier schedules, and battle for parking near workshop facilities, it is also more challenging than ever to attract large numbers of faculty to instructional technology workshops.

To broaden its reach, CIT's Faculty Development Services staff has developed an extensive set of online resources, initiated an outreach program to physically-distant areas of campus and created an annual Teaching and Learning with Technology conference for University faculty. However, the most successful venture has been the development of collaborative relationships with other University organizations and programs. These organizations and programs touch faculty for purposes other than technological training, but have identified instructional technology skill deficiencies among their constituents or have been interested in using instructional technology tools to deliver academic content. Faculty Development Services responds to these organizations by coordinating and/or facilitating customized learning opportunities for the identified faculty groups. The number of faculty served has increased and the scope of training has expanded.

To date, CIT's Faculty Development Services has collaborated with four University organizations to provide skill development opportunities in the area of instructional technology: Distributed and Distance Learning Services, the Liaison Librarian Program, the Academic Affairs Faculty Development Initiative and the Office on Institutional Research. The primary role of each organization or program and the learning opportunities associated with each partnership are described below.

## Distributed and Distance Learning Services

Distributed and Distance Learning Services is responsible for selecting, managing and promoting the University's course management system and related tools. In 2001, DDLS piloted the Summer Institute for Online Learning, designed to recruit faculty to teach new online sections of General Education courses. For the pilot program and subsequent full-fledged Institutes, DDLS has collaborated with CIT's Faculty Development Services in the design, coordination and facilitation of the event.

The Summer Institute has proven to be a fruitful venue for faculty skill development. With a \$2000 stipend issued to participating faculty for attending the workshop and agreeing to teach an online course during the summer, it is easy to attract applicants. Furthermore, the Institute's popularity and exposure has spurred other departments to initiate online course offerings and requests for faculty skill development.

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### Liaison Librarian Program

At JMU, a liaison librarian is assigned to each academic department to ensure that library services and collections meet the needs of students and faculty. Because liaison librarians are in constant contact with faculty throughout the University, they are a perfect communication conduit for CIT's Faculty Development Services. Furthermore, because CIT's Faculty Development Services are organizationally a member of Libraries and Educational Technologies, the development of collaborative relationships between Faculty Development Services staff and liaison librarians has been natural and easy.

Examples of faculty development opportunities that have emerged from this collaborative relationship are the 3-day Nursing Institute for Online Learning and a live, online workshop on plagiarism facilitated by a liaison librarian and offered to all faculty. The Nursing Institute was a direct result of the liaison librarian having identified skill development opportunities among the Nursing faculty who were launching a hybrid-delivered graduate Nursing program. The workshop on plagiarism, delivered through Centra Symposium, is a perfect example of demonstrating and developing participant skills in the effective use of technology within the context of academic material.

### Academic Affairs Initiative for Faculty Development

The JMU administration is committed to faculty development. This commitment is demonstrated by its support of Academic Affairs' multi-faceted program led by an experienced faculty member and focused on effective pedagogy.

The leader of this initiative recognizes that instructional technology is a critical element of today's learning environment and should be used in a pedagogically-sound manner. Therefore, she has involved CIT's Faculty Development Services in her program. Specifically, the CIT's Faculty Development Services staff have presented at the annual New Faculty Orientation, facilitated an instructional technology workshop to new faculty and participated as workshop facilitators in the Academic Affairs' Faculty Development annual workshop series for all faculty. An indirect, but beneficial role is serving as web master of the Academic Affairs' Faculty Development website.

### Office on Institutional Research

The primary role of the Office on Institutional Research is to collect, analyze and report data related to all aspects of University life. Recently, the organization acquired a grant to promote the use of WebSurveyor®, a user-friendly survey tool for in-class use and professional research.

The Director of Institutional Research requested that the CIT's Faculty Development Services collaborate with his organization to provide skill development opportunities for faculty. Registration for the first scheduled workshop was full two days after it was advertised. Two days later, the waiting list included more than 30 names. A second workshop was scheduled and more will be scheduled next semester.

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