



**NorthWest Arkansas
Community College**

**Distance
Learning
Report**

2000-2001



NorthWest Arkansas Community College Distance Learning Report 2000-2001

**Clint Brooks
Distance Learning Coordinator**

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Introduction and Acknowledgements

The following document is the 2000-2001 Annual Report for Distance Learning at NorthWest Arkansas Community College in Bentonville and Rogers, Arkansas. This report is required according to the 5 year Distance Learning Plan. Physical copies will be provided to the Board of Trustees (a single copy for the Board's records, additional on request); Dr. Bob Burns, President of NWACC; Dr. Karen Hodges, Vice President for Learning, and Dr. Jerry Vervack, Associate Vice President for Learning. In addition, the members of the Distance Education Committee will have copies of the document sent to them individually via e-mail.

The purpose of this document is to briefly describe the events of the 2000-2001 school year in distance learning at NWACC. The document focuses on both the classes taught using distance learning, as well as the department and personnel itself. Information in this document is derived from the semester reports and data obtained and managed by the distance learning department. The report has been prepared by Clint Brooks, Distance Learning Coordinator for NWACC.

The Distance Learning Department would like to acknowledge the following individuals and groups who support and make distance learning possible at NWACC. Special thanks go out to the staff of the Southwestern Bell Corporation scheduling office in St. Louis, Missouri, headed by Pati Alberts; their technical support team in North Little Rock, headed by Lee Gupton; their State account representatives John Davis and Pat Woodruff, and their tech consultant/contact Don Miller. Thanks also to the Arkansas Department of Information Systems, Cox Cable, Starnet- The Arkansas Video Users Group - President, Bob Donaldson; The Arkansas Distance Learning Association - President, Dr. Leon McLean; The Arkansas Telecommunications Consortium, AETN's Learning Services - especially Gerard Newsom, Lincoln High School, The Jones Center for Families, The University of Arkansas Center for Poultry Science, The Department of Educational Technology at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, Bob Craig, Gary Shepard, The NWACC Distance Education Committee, The NWACC IT Department headed by Octavio Arguelles, with special thanks to Matthew Morgan and Cliff Goeke; Louise Lamb and the NWACC Library; Victoria McClendon, Jim Barnsley, Laura Miller and the Learning Lab, NWACC Student Services (especially Alice Stephens, Kim Purdy, Brooke Bayer, Dr. Steve Brown, Brenda Green, Julie Jarrett, and Dr. Charles Mullins), NWACC Fiscal Affairs, Gerry Weatherford, The NWACC Senior Management Team, The NWACC Instructional Directors; Laura Selph, Sharon Simmons, Dr. Jerry Vervack, Associate Vice President for Learning; Dr. Karen Hodges, Vice President for Learning; Dr. Bob Burns, President, NWACC; the Board of Trustees, Charles H. Brannan, Chair; the distance learning instructors (Melissa Michael, Dr. Edrene McKay, Dr. Karen Hodges, Julie Amos, Rebecca Webb, Dr. Conrad Krauft, Dr. Diana Nagel, Dr. Theo Ekechukwu, Greg Kiser, Angela Peace, Dr. Linda Lovell, Deborah Terry, LeAnn Caudle, Karen Tinker, Dr. Karen Weeks), and especially the students in the Distance Learning classes without whom none of this would be possible.

Administrative

5 Year DE Plan

The timetable on the 5-Year Plan was altered this year so that evaluation and revision could occur in line with Master Planning at NWACC. The Plan was reviewed and revised in late spring. A vote is presently underway via e-mail. Pending approval by the Distance Education Committee, the plan will be added to the NWACC Institutional Technology Plan and will be designated the plan for 2001-2006.

Supervision

Dr. Jerry Vervack has been appointed the Associate Vice President for Learning. The Distance Learning Department will report directly to him within the Learning Department.

Equipment and Facilities

Equipment Purchases and Facility Changes

The WebCT server has been relocated to the NWACC campus. NWACC ended its contract with IPA of Fort Smith, Arkansas and moved the WebCT server to a local machine ("Student" on the Network Neighborhood). The relocation occurred between the Fall 2000 and Spring 2001 semesters and was facilitated by Matthew Morgan of the IT Department at NWACC. The Distance Learning department will continue to administrate WebCT and serve as the liaison with the WebCT Support Staff. The IT department will maintain the server hosting WebCT.

The Distance Learning Department has obtained the following software in the previous year:

- Adobe Acrobat for the creation of PDF (Portable Data Format) documents on the WWW.
- Adobe Pagemaker (via an extra license courtesy of the Business and Computers Department)
- Adobe Photoshop LE (same as Pagemaker)

The Student Services Department purchased monitors and a scan converter for the purposes of setting up an internal bulletin board using the CEF cable network from Cox Cable. The board is powered by a non-networked PC, connected to the scan converter, and then modulated onto the cable network at the central in-point for the network. The board is a PowerPoint presentation maintained by Brooke Bayer of Student Services and updated to the PC weekly by the Distance Learning Department.

The Department has purchased equipment for a major upgrade to the Compressed Interactive Video classroom. This upgrade will provide equipment for a permanent move to the planned West End development of the CEF (see below). These changes will allow the room to be set up as a regular classroom with students facing both monitors and the instructor. The following will be added by the start of the 2001-2002 year:

- A second camera
- two 52" monitors with screen guards
- carts for the 52" monitors, carts for the 32" monitors

- cabling for the extra monitors and camera
- a portable whiteboard
- a Mimio digital meeting assistant to provide video whiteboard capabilities
- a wireless microphone for the instructor.

The equipment should be installed by mid-July 2001.

Planned Equipment Purchases and Facility Changes

The Distance Learning Lab presently in CEF 1223 will be relocated to the West End development in the CEF upon completion. The expected date for completion looks at present to be the end of 2002. The Distance Learning Coordinator has already met with the architects for the project and the room and accompanying office are in the present plans for the West End.

Pursuant to the West End change, expectations are that the satellite equipment presently in CEF 1213 will need to be relocated to provide room for the networking lab to be started in that room in the Fall of 2001. If this move occurs, the following options exist:

- Move the equipment to the new office of the Distance Learning Coordinator in the West End. This solution would require the relocation of the satellite dishes which, for technical reasons, must be within 250' of the receiving equipment.
- Move the equipment to a room somewhere within 250' of the present dish locations. This corresponds to the reluctance among some NWACC administrators to move the dishes, and would provide a proximal location to White Hall, a logical site for satellite conferences.

A decision on the move has not been made at the time of this report.

The Distance Learning Department will study in the coming fiscal budgeting cycle (for 2002-2003) the feasibility of extending the license for WebCT back to an unlimited user level. The license was restricted to only 1600 users this year due to budgeting and price increases from WebCT. January 2002 will see a renewal of the current level of the license. The earliest new license cycle that can include the increase begins January 2003, although a prorated increase is possible at the beginning of the 2003 fiscal year.

Budgetary Information

Budget for 2000-2001

Item/Category	Subtotals	Est. Annual Amount
Maintenance and Operations Expenses		
<i>Office Expenses</i>		
Phone/Long Distance		\$200.00
Copying		\$700.00
Postage		\$100.00
Supplies-Internal		\$100.00
Supplies-External		\$100.00
<i>Computer Equipment under \$500</i>		
Computer Hardware < \$500		\$200.00
Computer Software		\$200.00

Computer Equipment over \$500

No anticipated expenses
from 470 or 471

Travel

Travel-Lodging and Meals \$450.00

Travel-Private Vehicle,
In-State \$700.00

**Dues, Fees, Publicity,
and Advertising**

Advertising \$250.00

Fees-Telecourses \$3,150.00

Fees- Telecourse \$3,360.00

Capaitation Estimates

Fees-Satellite Conf. \$1,500.00

Licenses

Fees-Telecourse \$150.00

Consortium

Fees- Licenses for \$159.00

WWW Based courses

Fees-Vtel Maintenance \$5,274.00
and Service Contract

Tax on Maintenance \$268.92
and Service Contract

Total for Maintenance \$5,542.92
and Service Contract

Subtotals of Maintenance
and Service Contract

VTEL System, Monitors, \$4,921

Mics, ELMO

TSU100 \$353

Printing Expenses \$250.00

Web CT License \$1,500.00

Facilitator Costs at \$1,280
Springdale

Total A Items \$16,502.92

Total C Items \$3,389.00

**Grand Total Including
Salary and Fringe \$62,959.92**

**Estimated Income from
Distance Learning Student
Fees \$11,352.00**

**Requested M&O minus
estimated income from
DL Student Fees \$8,539.92**

**Grand Total Including
Salary and Fringe minus
estimated student fees income \$51,607.92**

Estimated Income from Distance Learning Student Fees for 2000-2001:

This estimation above is based on the following assumptions:

Anticipated 6 Telecourses with an average of 20 students (3 Fall, 3 Spring)

Anticipated 18 WWW courses with an average of 16 students (1 Summer, 8 Fall, 9 Spring)

Anticipated 6 Self Directed Study courses with an average of 16 students (3 Fall, 3 Spring)

Anticipated 2 CIV classes where Fees are applicable with an average of 6 students (1 Fall, 1 Spring)

Total anticipated students paying fees: $516 \times \$22 = \$11,352$

Actual Revenues from student fees: \$8,904.80 (not including activity for June 2001)

Part of the reason for the resulting difference was the cancellation of 2 Self-Directed Study courses for the Spring 2001 semester. The telecourse enrollments were also significantly lower than anticipated and the CIV class for the spring that would have generated fee revenue did not make.

Classes

Classes Conducted (see Tables of Distance Learning Classes for specific enrollment numbers)

CIV (Compressed Interactive Video)

The Compressed Interactive Video courses did not fare well in 2000-2001. While we did offer a course from the ACTA agricultural consortium for the first time (Intro to Plant Sciences from the University of Arkansas), the Lincoln Western Civilization numbers, particularly Western Civilization II, were disappointing. Also, the Beginning Algebra class to the Jones Center for the spring semester did not make. This was surprising considering that the previous two semesters for that class had been very well attended. There was no movement in 2000-2001 regarding the Arkansas Tech Emergency Management program. The attempt in the fall to carry a class did not make.

Telecourses

The central issue with telecourses continues to be retention. 20-25% of the telecourse students have been withdrawing from the courses. While one issue is likely the amount of independence required for such a course; the retention for Self-Directed courses, which require to some extent more independence, were similar or even better in some cases. Communication and interaction are likely factors. The encouragement to use WebCT as a communications and information tool in the courses must continue. Psychology, Sociology, and American History I and II (to 1877 and after) were offered in 2000-2001.

Self-Directed Study

The Self-Directed Study courses were World Literature to 1650, Business Communications, and Database Management (Access 2000). Unfortunately, the latter two courses were not offered in

the spring semester. There are plans to re-offer them in the fall of 2001 and the Database Management course is being offered in the first summer session of 2001 as well.

Retention is an issue in these courses as well, although the tutorials provided and the inclusion of study sessions and regular contact of some sort seems to have improved retention somewhat in a couple of the courses.

Internet/Web-Based

Internet courses continued to expand with the addition of courses in Accounting II and General Psychology in the fall. In addition, the Art Appreciation course began offering 2 sections in the spring of 2001. The Basic HTML Programming became Web Page Design in the spring of 2001 also. College Chemistry I was offered in the summer. The other courses available were Internet Resourcing, and English Composition II,

Retention has been an issue in the WWW courses as well. There was particularly a problem with students getting into these and other distance learning courses without the required instructor consent and thus, some students who entered the class were not as familiar or comfortable with using the Internet as necessary to succeed in the course. Greater support will probably be necessary as well. A number of support pages were provided for WebCT usage on the Distance Learning Web Site, but these will need to be updated for the new version of WebCT (3.1).

ACCESS Arkansas

NWACC continued to offer courses through ACCESS Arkansas. ACCESS Arkansas and AATYC have renegotiated the WebCT license and the present license NWACC is running under is for 1600 users at a cost of \$1800 per year. This was disappointing as the previous license was for unlimited usage for only \$1500 annually. Unlimited usage licenses for the standard version of WebCT now run over \$3000 annually under the agreement.

While a planned Associate of Arts (AA) program has still not been laid out by ACCESS Arkansas, a number of 2-year schools are approaching the idea of the degree via the Internet. Westark College was advertising such a degree at the end of the school year.

Classes Planned

CIV (Compressed Interactive Video)

Beginning Algebra will be offered in the fall of 2001 in an attempt to create a more natural schedule for students (Beginning in the fall and Intermediate in the spring). Western Civilization will be offered again to Lincoln next year (I in the fall and II in the spring), and College Algebra will also be offered for the first time. 17 students from Lincoln and up to 10 from Prairie Grove are expected to take part. The College Algebra class will be offered in the early morning MWF timeslot as a number of Prairie Grove students are expected to travel to Lincoln to take the class and this slot gives them time to get back to class at their school.

ACTA continues to add courses. NWACC is presently considering repeating the Introduction to Plant Sciences, as well as adding a Turfgrass Management course, and possibly a one-hour Food Sciences course.

Arkansas Tech University will be offering an initial Emergency Management course, "Aim and Scope of Emergency Management" this fall on Wednesday evenings.

Discussions are planned with Wade Kniseley, NWACC Foreign Language department head, to explore the possibility of course exchanges in foreign language between Arkansas two-year schools.

Telecourses

NWACC will continue to offer Psychology, Sociology, and American History I and II. The Psychology telecourse, "Discovering Psychology" is being updated this fall. We are also switching to the telecourse "Shaping America" for American History to 1877. No additions to telecourses are planned at present but the possibility of a geography or political sciences course exists.

Self-Directed Study

Dr. Melinda Word will teach the World Literature I (Survey to 1650) class in the fall. If Dr. Word is unavailable, Dr. Audley hall is expected to teach the course. Dr. Word would ultimately like to convert the course to a WWW based course. Business Communications and Database Management will be offered again in the fall. There has been no word on their availability for the spring.

Internet/Web-Based

Two new courses will be offered in the fall: English Composition I from Prentice Hall and taught by Tim McGinn, and Networking and Info Systems, designed and taught by Angela Peace. Troy Cash will be developing a course in programming during the summer that will be offered in 2002.

English Composition I and Art Appreciation will offer two sections online each. The other courses available in the fall will be the networking class by Angela Peace, Principles of Accounting II, Web Page Design, English Composition II, Internet Resourcing, and General Psychology.

There are plans to offer one or both of Micro and Macroeconomics, possibly in the spring of 2002. In addition, money for development has been budgeted and up to 4 new courses could be developed by summer of 2002.

ACCESS Arkansas

ACCESS Arkansas will continue to market courses on their site for Arkansas two-year schools, and negotiate consortium prices for the use of course management systems such as WebCT. How much training ACCESS Arkansas will provide for schools is still unknown. Plans have been discussed in the past year for a training initiative but other than a meeting in the spring, no news has been available.

Student Services

Student Services activities regarding Distance Learning took a noticeable change in 2000-2001. In addition to the addition of an on-campus video bulletin board for informational purposes (see below), the largest change by far was the introduction of Web registration.

The Banner system that NWACC uses for student information management contains a number of applications that work on the World Wide Web. Student Services and the Institutional Technology Department implemented the technology with the assistance of a task force represented by every branch of the college, including the Distance Learning Department.

A trial run was held with registration for the spring 2001 semester. A limited number of students were given access to the system via their advisors and the results were overwhelmingly positive.

Web registration has been fully implemented for the summer and fall registration. In addition to the registration tools, a number of other informational tools are available via the Banner Web product.

Also, as a result of the Web registration, NWACC has had to reevaluate the way in which it conducts advising and other student services. Two results of this have been making the advising process much more student driven, and also the provision of a great deal of documents and information on the WWW in HTML and especially .pdf format (Adobe Acrobat Reader) including Application forms and the College Catalog. The result is that distance students have a far greater amount of resources available to them than before and have a higher expectation of service than ever before at NWACC.

Training

Training activities for 2000-2001 consisted of the following:

A learning opportunity on Distance Learning was held for faculty and staff on Friday, November 17, 2000. The event consisted of the presentation of an edited (with permission) version of the Dallas County Community College District broadcast "Are You History?" regarding faculty rights and roles in distance learning. In addition, there were presentations from the following NWACC faculty: Dr. Linda Lovell (self-developed WWW Based courses), Karen Tinker (publisher WWW Based courses), Julie Amos (Self-Directed Study), Dr. Edrene McKay (Compressed Interactive Video courses), and Greg Kiser (Telecourses). The presentation concluded with a discussion of the issues as related to NWACC.

Training was conducted on December 7th and 8th, 2000 for the new version of WebCT. Dr. Karen Hodges, Dr. Edrene McKay, LeAnn Caudle, Angela Peace, Deborah Terry, Conrad Krauft, Dr. Linda Lovell, and Karen Tinker attended training in WebCT version 3.1.

Training was conducted in the months of April and May in the use of WebCT 3.1 for individuals not familiar with the system. Troy Cash, Judith Tavano, Dr. Caroline Burton, Tim McGinn, Carol Olson, and Dr. Michaele Ann Buell participated in the training.

Related activities included discussions on distance learning with two separate classes from the University of Arkansas, one in distance learning, taught by Dr. William Brescia, and the other in community colleges, taught by Dr. Karen Stauffacher. In addition, Harry Almond, a teacher from

the Gravette school district, served as an intern with distance learning for the spring semester as part of the requirements for his distance learning class at the University of Arkansas (taught by Dr. William Brescia).

The Distance Learning Coordinator also participated as an instructor in a faculty/staff in-service for the Rogers Public Schools teaching a session on graphics conversion.

NCA Self Study Recommendations Progress Report

In the fall of 1999, the NCA formally continued NWACC accreditation for the next ten years. As part of that continued accreditation, NWACC is expected to achieve progress in all "areas for improvement". The Distance Learning Department's areas for improvement are listed below, including the recommendations of the committee for action on each item. They are followed by a brief progress report.

Areas of Improvement and Recommendations for Distance Learning

The DE Task Committee has identified the following areas for improvement in the Distance Learning Department. They have been indexed to the appropriate NCA-CIHE Guideline. They are each also accompanied by recommendations on how to address them.

1. Student Interaction in Telecourses and Self-Directed Study Courses (Curriculum and Instruction): Programs provide for timely and appropriate interaction between students and faculty and among students. The student survey responses as well as some evaluation feedback have indicated that some students in these courses do not feel as though they have sufficient contact with other students. While these courses are geared toward independent study and work, the social context of these classes and the benefits of student contact and cooperation should not be ignored.

Recommendation: Incorporate Web CT to add interactivity between students. Web CT functions that may facilitate this include Chat (synchronous communication) and Bulletin Board (asynchronous). Develop student study groups (voluntary only) that give students a chance to communicate via phone and e-mail, as well as meet independently. In the past some students have done this on their own. Another possibility that will be explored is altering the structure of the classes so students must meet more with the instructor, either as a group or individuals.

Progress: Slow but steady progress is being made here. WebCT course pages are made available to all distance learning classes. Usage of the software has depended on two factors: the experience of the instructor with online applications, and the response of the students. Student response has been weak, primarily because in non-WWW classes, the WWW materials and communications tools are not required for fear of isolating students who do not have regular WWW access.

2. Telecourse and Self-Directed Study Training (Curriculum and Instruction): The institution provides appropriate training for faculty who teach in distance education programs. While CIV training is well developed and Web Based Classes training is under development, the training in these two areas has been minimal at best. This has been done primarily through consultation and support, which is underscored by the fact that of all distance learning at NWACC, telecourse and self-directed study instructors must be the most independent, due to the nature of their courses.

Recommendation: The Distance Learning Department should develop orientation sessions for novice instructors using these technologies and develop and provide resources for potential instructors.

Progress: No progress has been made to date, primarily due to prioritization. Goals for the 2001-2002 year include the development of training courses for these areas and other distance learning in the WebCT course management system.

3. Assessment (Evaluation and Assessment): The institution assesses student capability to succeed in distance education programs. Assessment is a high priority at NWACC and the Distance Learning Department is no exception. There especially exists the need to develop pre-assessment for students interested in distance learning so that they can accurately analyze their likelihood of success. A need also exists for analyzing distance learning for any possible significant differences in those classes compared to the traditional offerings.

Recommendation: The College has hired an Academic Learning Assessment Coordinator who has helped advance the development of effective and comprehensive assessment programs in each department and institutionally, as initiated by the Assessment Committee. As each department and division continues to develop its own guidelines and policies for assessing the ways in which the curriculum has been taught and learned, the Distance Learning Department needs to focus in two areas unique to itself.

A. An effective means of pre-assessment for students considering distance learning classes is needed. This would serve two purposes: Identify which students are likely to succeed or struggle in various types of distance learning environments and advise students according. The latter purpose might also include working with students to develop the skills necessary to succeed in distance learning. Since the types of distance learning and their requisite skills differ, this will take careful research, consideration and planning.

B. The Distance Learning Department needs to develop assessment of student outcomes, especially identifying any discrepancies between outcomes of students in distance learning and those in regular "face to face" classes. Some basic methods are in place. Grades in distance learning classes are tracked and attitudes are surveyed via evaluations. The key effort will be to develop a reliable form of evaluation using these and heretofore unused methods. Other methods will need to be explored including surveys of graduates and students who have advanced from distance learning classes.

Progress: Progress in section A has consisted of the use of instructor consent to evaluate students and initiate contacts with instructors. There are still no standardized materials developed for student assessment or training in these areas. Tutorials and other assisting materials exist or are being developed for web courses. Section B has not been addressed due to the inconsistent nature of evaluation responses and the difficulty in developing samples with which to assess. One possibility is that assessment results for degree plans and departments can be measured against average results in these courses in areas including academic grades, retention, and post-course academic success.

4. Monitoring Use of Student Resources (Library and Learning Resources): The institution monitors whether students make appropriate use of learning resources. At present, some informal tracking is done of resource utilization by distance learning students. A standard procedure for obtaining this information does not exist.

Recommendation- Web CT will aid in web-based courses as it contains tracking applications, which will record usage of online students. Altering the evaluations to discover if resources are being used is another possibility. They are already used to gauge student attitudes about the value of the class web pages. More tracking for individual resources (sign in sheets, logbooks, etc.) should be applied to resources that do not offer an easier system of tracking usage, especially those that are made available at off campus sites.

Progress: WebCT tracking has worked as a tracking tool for instructors. At present, aside from backup telecourses, no significant usage of ancillary materials is occurring in the distance learning courses aside from those that are directly measurable (instructor calculator rentals, telecourse backup checkouts).

5. Advertising/Recruiting/Information: The institution provides to students advertising, recruiting and admissions information that adequately and accurately represents the programs, requirements and services available. Other than brochures designed by the Distance Learning Department and published by Student Services and the Distance Learning Web Site, there is no concerted literature or contacts aimed at distance students. The audience that this has the greatest impact on is our smallest distance population: compressed video students off campus. Other distance students usually live in the immediate area and are able to avail themselves of the standard services and literature. Even then, the amount of information provided is limited at best.

Recommendation: Continue to provide materials to Student Orientation (NSO, SOAR) for distribution/dissemination to students, flyers for Arena registration, brochures/flyers for advisors. Make publications available to off campus students.

Progress: Materials have been made available to Student Services, Public Service Announcements and Press Releases are made available to the local media outlets, and a number of materials are online. In addition, the college main web page has a direct link to the distance learning web site. Paid advertising is unlikely given the limited budget for such expenditures.

Local Initiatives and Business

No major local initiatives were undertaken this year. There was an attempt to bring in financial manager classes for a local bank but there proved to be too many technical expenses and obstacles. A one-shot satellite broadcast was brought in for the Chamber of Commerce in the spring.

Community Education utilizing the satellite equipment has not happened as of yet. Lack of organizational time is the central reason. Plans to develop this resource for the community are still in the works though and hopefully, progress will come in the following year.

Gail Quillen resigned as Director of Technology for the Fayetteville Public School District. There has been no word regarding the Technology Advisory Committee.

State Initiatives and Business

The following list describes state initiatives or groups that the NWACC Distance Learning Department has been involved in or with, or that directly affect distance learning at NWACC.

ACCESS Arkansas

Meetings were held in July 27 and 28 of 2000 to discuss the state of ACCESS Arkansas and future developments. The decision was made to further develop training, marketing and there was also discussion as to how degrees were available using ACCESS Arkansas. It is apparent that different schools can advise students to use ACCESS Arkansas to pick up classes not available via Distance Learning at their home institution. It was also revealed that the two-year schools affiliated with the University of Arkansas (UA Community Colleges at Hope, Batesville; Phillips County C.C.) were planning on developing classes to cover the entire Associate of Arts transfer degree.

A meeting was held in the spring of 2001 in Conway, Arkansas, but no representatives of NWACC were able to attend.

ACCESS Arkansas and AATYC renegotiated the contract for WebCT licensing. The resulting renegotiations resulted in an increase in license fees. The fee NWACC now pays is \$1800 for a 1600 user annual license, up from \$1500 for an unlimited license (the unlimited license is now over \$3000). These changes were primarily the result of WebCT restructuring their product and increasing the overall cost.

ARDLA /USDLA

The Arkansas Distance Learning Association continues to have their website hosted on NWACC servers in exchange for an institutional membership in the Association. The NWACC Distance Learning Coordinator is the Webmaster for this site. Changes to the site have been infrequent at best.

Arkansas Telecommunications Consortium

The Arkansas Telecommunications Consortium (Also referred to as the Telecourse Consortium) had their Executive Committee Meeting on February 12, 2001. In addition to discussions of initiatives AETN is planning on taking in Distance Learning, the telecourse schedule for the next few years was set. The primary classes we carry by telecourse, Psychology, Sociology, and American History I and II, are guaranteed to run at least until 2003.

ELE (AETN/Arkansas Leadership Academy)

The Distance Learning Coordinator presented a videoconference session on Distance Learning for the participants of The Arkansas Leadership Academy and AETN's "Electronic Learning Environment Institute" (ELE) on July 24 and November 6 of 2000 and also April 24 of 2001. The presentation outlines a variety of distance learning considerations and practices including videoconferencing, web-based courses, satellite, and broadcast. The videoconferences originated from CEF 1223 at NorthWest Arkansas Community College in Bentonville.

On July 26 and 27, 2000 The Distance Learning Coordinator served as an instructor at Fairfield Bay, Arkansas for additional sessions of the ELE, including Web Page Design and Networking/Internet (Internet tools).

Legislation

The 2001 Arkansas Legislative Session saw one key issue for distance learning. The infrastructure for the state videoconferencing network (that is the units that link sites on the network, the cabling that connects them, the software that runs them, and the personnel that manage the scheduling of the units) has been funded by various levels of the state for the past several years. Most recently, the Arkansas Department of Education, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, and the University of Arkansas system has covered these charges. The Arkansas Department of Information Systems attempted to include these charges in their budget for the next two years and hoped to have them added as a regular expense. The Legislature declined to pass the bill that would have enacted this budgetary strategy and as a result, the individual sites on the network, in addition to the local line costs and equipment maintenance that we have always paid, must now foot the cost of the state's videoconferencing network as well. The expected increase in charges will run about \$500 - 600 monthly. There is a real danger that if some sites on the network feel that these charge increases are too steep, that they will drop out of the network. Since the network charges cover the system-wide expenses, the fewer sites remaining on the network, the higher the cost they will have to cover.

State Compressed Video Network (Starnet)

Starnet, the Network of Arkansas Compressed Video Users, attempted to get the legislators to pass the bill financing the state infrastructure. In view of the state's refusal to do this, the members of Starnet must consider exploring new funding sources that will at least temporarily preserve the network. This may have to happen on an individual basis, which means that some sites may be unable to muster the funding.

As part of the effort to get the infrastructure funded, the Distance Learning Coordinator has developed a clickable online map that shows the sites on the state network and links to information about each site. The site is on the NWACC web server at <http://www.nwacc.net/disted/nwdemap.htm>

Other Duties and Responsibilities

This section details miscellaneous on campus duties not directly related to the support of distance learning classes.

College and Community Satellite Downlinks

Satellite usage over the 2000-2001 year saw steady, if unspectacular usage. No organized use of satellite facilities for community development has been established. However, the occasional individual broadcasts have occurred, some of which served the community's interests well. August saw two broadcasts for local special educators from the Arkansas Department of Education. October saw the taping of a PBS/ALSS offering about online education called "Are You History?". This broadcast was shown at a learning opportunity for faculty in mid-November. In addition a few of PBS/ALSS broadcasts were recorded for potential later use, including "Life Map", a broadcast aimed at improving outreach to Spanish speaking families through ESL, and

the latest GED 2002 broadcast. The department also downloaded 3 programs from PBS's "Ready 2 Net" series about online learning, facilitated/received a broadcast for the Rogers Chamber of Commerce, and recorded and an Adult Learning broadcast ("Reaching Adult Learners in New Ways").

There are a number of free broadcasts available that could serve as community education. The primary needs are time to organize, and a group or committee to help identify the most likely broadcasts that will attract community interest and serve community needs.

Cable Television

2000-2001 saw at last the completion of the cable infrastructure of the CEF. Not only have the planned cable outlets been set in place, but the satellite and auxiliary feeds that originated as part of our satellite downlink system bid are now available on the cable running in the CEF building. This includes free C-Band programming and events(via our 4DTV analog/digital satellite receiver) on channel 91, PBS programming (via our DSR4200V digital satellite receiver) on channel 93, the CEF wide video information bulletin board (a PowerPoint presentation running from a computer to the video equipment) on channel 100, and an auxiliary VCR running on channel 102. We can now feed any signal from the satellite dishes to any monitor with cable in the CEF. This will allow us to run a satellite conference or program into any room with cable access.

Search Committees

The Distance Learning Coordinator participated in the search committees for the following positions at NWACC: Dean of Institutional Technology, Academic Computer Support Specialist

Conferences, Presentations, and Travel

The following is a list of conferences and presentations that the Distance Learning Coordinator has been involved with from July 2000 through June 2001.

AETN/Arkansas Leadership Academy Electronic Learning Environment Institute (Distance Learning) - via videoconference July 24, 2000, November 6, 2000, April 24, 2001
AETN/Arkansas Leadership Academy Electronic Learning Environment (Web Page Design, and Networking/Internet) - Fairfield Bay, AR, July 26, 27, 2000
ACCESS Arkansas Business Meeting and Workshop (Discussion Panel) - Eureka Springs, AR, July, 27, 28, 2000
Rogers Public Schools Technology In-Service (Graphics Workshop and Graphics Conversion)- Rogers, AR, August 16, 2000

Conclusion

The 2000-2001 year demonstrated a great deal of promise in all areas of distance learning, but also some serious issues of concern.

While it seems that a number of avenues for videoconference usage are coming up, including our articulation agreement with Arkansas Tech University for Fire Science/Emergency Management, and the ACTA Agricultural consortium, as well as the classes to Lincoln High School, we are also faced with increased charges for the usage of the videoconferencing equipment.

The WWW-Based classes continue to grow, with steady additions on a semester basis but we are now needing to look at what it will take to deliver a full Associates degree via distance learning as other schools are marching in that direction. We also must directly address issues of retention in these and all distance learning classes.

Telecourses continue to be steady but need more direct and consistent ways to establish student-teacher and student-student contact.

Self-Directed Study courses need retention solutions as well, and also need to find ways to further engage the students on a regular basis, probably using the WWW tools available in WebCT. In order to do so, students will have to have regular access to the Internet.

All in all we are fast approaching a crossroads regarding the directions we take. It seems more and more likely that we will be soon looking at degrees via distance learning rather than just classes. We have made great strides in our support of students with the addition of online registration and the consideration of online support issues that relate to that service. We must continue to discover what it will take to support students who do not ever set foot on campus, and to learn what procedures and organization will best facilitate their college experience. We will also come up against regulations regarding degrees and degree residency at some point and will need to find out what limitations there are in the present system and in our options for distance learners.

There are many people who think that the Internet bodes of a changing wind that will blow away the traditional educational system, bricks and all, replacing it with a telecommunications/technology model. I do not share that view. However, as our student population continues to change, and become busier and more technologically literate, distance learning is going to be an option that is useful to them, even necessary in many cases. Soon we will begin to learn just how much so and how prepared we are to meet the needs those changes present.

Clint Brooks

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clint Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Distance Learning Coordinator,
NorthWest Arkansas Community College
June 20, 2000

Tables of Distance Learning Classes

Compressed Interactive Video

Fall 2000

Class	Local Enrollment	Remote Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Withdrawals
The Air Force Today	Did not make	Did not make	Did not make	NA
The Development of Air Power Intermediate	Did not make	Did not make	Did not make	NA
Algebra - Jones Center	14	11	25	4 (3 NWACC, 1 JCF)
Intro to Plant Science	2	UAF or UACCH	2	0
Western Civilization I - Lincoln	11	9 Step Ahead, 3 Reg. Lincoln	20	7 (5 NWACC, 1 Step Ahead, 1 Lincoln Reg.)
Totals	27	22	49	11

Spring 2001

Class	Local Enrollment	Remote Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Withdrawals
The Air Force Today	Did not make	Did not make	Did not make	NA
The Development of Air Power Beginning	Did not make	Did not make	Did not make	NA
Algebra - Jones Center	Did not make	Did not make	Did not make	NA
Western Civilization II - Lincoln	5	5 Step Ahead, 1 Lincoln Reg.	11	2 (NWACC)
Totals	5	6	11	2

Totals 2000-2001

Classes	Local Enrollment	Remote Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Withdrawals
9	32	28	60	13

Self Directed Study

Fall 2000

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
Business Communications	14	1
Database Management - Access 2000	10	1
World Literature I	26	4
Totals	50	6

Spring 2001

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
World Literature I	24	4
Totals	24	4

Summer I 2001

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
Database Management - Access 2000	7	?
Totals	7	?

Totals 2000-2001

Classes	Enrollment	Withdrawals
4	81	10+

Telecourses

Fall 2000

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
History of the American People to 1877	21	7
General Psychology	19	5
General Sociology	16	5
Totals	56	17

Spring 2001

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
History of the American People Since 1877	14	6
General Psychology	13	3
General Sociology	13	4
Totals	40	13

Total 2000-2001

Classes	Enrollment	Withdrawals
6	96	30

WWW Based Courses

Fall 2000

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
Principles of Accounting II	11	1
Art Appreciation	18	5
Basic HTML Programming	23	7
English Composition II	20	7
General Psychology	13	3
Internet Resourcing	32	11
Totals	117	34

Spring 2001

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
Principles of Accounting II	9	1
Art Appreciation (2 sections)	29	3
English Composition II	15	3
General Psychology	18	3
Internet Resourcing	15	5
Web Page Design (2 sections)	27	10
Totals	113	25

Summer I 2001

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
Internet Resourcing	10	?
Web Page Design	12	?
Totals	22	?

Total 2000-2001

Classes	Enrollment	Withdrawals
14 (16 sections)	252	59+

Total NWACC Enrolled Distance Learning Courses

Classes	Enrollment	Withdrawals
33 (35 sections)	489	112+

+ Classes still in session at the time of the report.

2000-2001 Distance Learning Committee

Clint Brooks, Chair - Distance Learning Coordinator

Jim Barnsley - Learning Lab Supervisor

Randy Bray - CTC Coordinator

Troy Cash - Faculty, Computer Information

Susan Denman* - Life Development Center Advisor; Testing Center Coordinator

Cindy Hammons - OSHA/EPA Environmental Regulations, Safety and Hazardous Materials

Dr. Conrad Krauft - Faculty, Psychology; Lead Faculty, Social Sciences

Dr. Linda Lovell - Faculty, Library and English

Kim Purdy - Document Examiner I; Student Services Webmaster

Judith Tavano - Instructor, Workforce Development Institute

Dr. Jerry Vervack - Assistant Vice President for Learning; Division Chair, Social Sciences

Marjorie Whitmore - Faculty, Mathematics

* departed from NWACC during the year