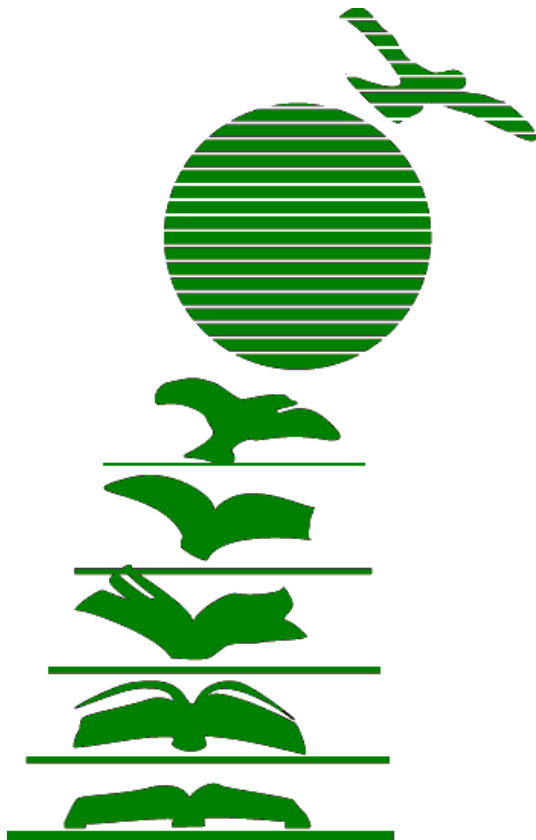


NorthWest Arkansas Community College



Distance Learning Annual Report

2001-2002



**NorthWest Arkansas
Community College
Distance Learning
Report
2001-2002**

**Clint Brooks
Distance Learning Coordinator**

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Introduction and Acknowledgements

The following document is the 2001-2002 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 Programs. 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 2001-2002 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, VNet- The Arkansas Video Users Group - Outgoing President, Bob Donaldson, President Mike Bowman, and Vice President Dave Phillips; The Arkansas Distance Learning Association - President, Bob Donaldson; 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 NWACC Distance Education Committee, The NWACC IT Department headed by Octavio Arguelles, with special thanks to Matthew Morgan, A. J. McDonald, and Cliff Goeke; Louise Lamb and the NWACC Library; Victoria McClendon, Jim Barnsley, Laura Miller and the Learning Lab, NWACC Student Services (especially Brenda Green, Alice Stephens, Diana Johnson, and Julie Jarrett, NWACC Fiscal Affairs, Carol Childers, 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; Harry Almond, Ibrahim Poda, 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, Bryan Aguiar, Tim McGinn, Jim Laughton, Angie Albright), and especially the students in the Distance Learning classes without whom none of this would be possible.

Administrative

5 Year DE Plan

Pending e-mail approval by the Distance Education Committee, the plan will be added to the NWACC Institutional Technology Plan and will be designated the plan for 2002-2007.

Supervision

The Distance Learning Department continues to report directly to Dr. Jerry Vervack, Associate Vice President for Learning Programs, within the Learning Department.

Equipment and Facilities

Equipment Purchases and Facility Changes

The Central Educational Facility (CEF) has been renamed to the Central Educational Center (CEC).

The IT department continues to maintain the on-campus server hosting WebCT. The server has run well, with the exception of a conflict with Command.com anti-virus software. The problem was resolved by replacing Command.com with the MacAfee anti-virus product. WebCT has been upgraded to version 3.6.3 as of the Summer I 2002 semester. The license runs until July 2003, with a follow-up payment in January of 2003.

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

- Macromedia Flash
- Additional equipment for the Compressed Interactive Video Lab (CEC 1223):
 - A second Sony 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.
 - A portable mouse for the computer in CEC 1223

Planned Equipment Purchases and Facility Changes

Ground was broken for the West Annex to the Central Educational Center, where the compressed interactive video equipment will be relocated to at the completion of the facility sometime between late fall 2002 and early spring 2003. The Distance Learning Coordinator's office will be relocated there as well. The new room is being designed for videoconferencing and should include strong indirect lighting, floor conduit, carpeting, and wall material to dampen sound, as well as the requisite outlets for power and telecommunications.

Pursuant to the West Annex change, expectations are that the satellite equipment presently in CEC 1213 will need to be relocated to provide room for Computer and Networking classes. At present the plan is to relocate the satellite equipment to a nearby room or office within the required distance to the satellite equipment.

The Distance Learning Department is presently considering the possibility of moving from WebCT to another course management system or using various web tools "ala carte" to create web classes. The primary problem is the increased cost of WebCT's annual license. AATYC is planning meetings to discuss the issue of WebCT price increases. NWACC will wait until after these meetings to develop a strategy for change or adaptation if necessary. The primary concern is with increased expense in using the web courses. However, since a number of our courses are publisher-provided, any change to a new system will have to consider whether or not those courses can be taught in such a system. Conversion of NWACC owned courses and retraining are two other considerations.

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
<i>Computer Equipment over \$500</i>		
No anticipated expenses from 470 or 471		
<i>Travel</i>		
Travel-Lodging and Meals		\$450.00
Travel-Private Vehicle, In-State		\$700.00
<i>Dues, Fees, Publicity, and Advertising</i>		
Advertising		\$250.00
Fees-Telecourses		\$3,150.00
Fees- Telecourse		\$3,360.00
Capitation Estimates		
Fees-Satellite Conf.		\$1,500.00
Licenses		
Fees-Telecourse Consortium		\$150.00
Fees-Vtel Maintenance and Service Contract	\$5,274.00	
Tax on Maintenance	\$268.92	

and Service Contract		
Total for Maintenance and Service Contract		\$5,542.92
Subtotals of Maintenance and Service Contract		
VTEL System, Monitors, Mics, ELMO	\$4,921	
TSU100	\$353	
Printing Expenses		\$250.00
Web CT License		\$1,800.00 (actual cost \$5400)
Facilitator Costs in Evening at CEF (CEC)		\$1,280
Facilitator Costs at Springdale		\$1,280
Online Class Development Funds		\$9,200 (reduced to cover WebCT costs)
Total A Items		\$26,002.92
Total C Items		\$1,700.00
Grand Total Including Salary and Fringe		\$85,001.92
Estimated Income from Distance Learning Student Fees		\$12,240.00
Requested M&O minus estimated income from DL Student Fees		\$18,022.92
Grand Total Including Salary and Fringe minus estimated student fees income		\$72,761.92

Estimated Income from Distance Learning Student Fees for 2001-2002:

The number above is based on the following estimations:

Anticipated 7 Telecourses with an average of 20 students (3 Fall, 3 Spring)

Anticipated 22 WWW sections with an average of 16 students (2 Summer, 9 Fall, 10-11 Spring)

Anticipated 6 Self Directed Study sections with an average of 16 students (1 Summer, 3 Fall, 1-3 Spring)

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

Total anticipated students paying full fees: $456 \times \$22 = \$10,672$

Total students paying partial fees (Business and Computing): $112 \times \$14 = \$1,568$

Total Fees expected: \$12,240

These numbers are fairly conservative, as these expectations may not pan out. They will possibly be exceeded, particularly the number of WWW classes offered. However, since the numbers in other courses have fluctuated and since not all Web courses offer maximum seating above 20 I have tried to keep this estimation as reasonable as possible. Note that the telecourse estimation for AETN fees is based on a higher number of offered courses than the one listed here. This is to guarantee that if an unexpected course is added, there will be no shortfall.

Classes

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

CIV (Compressed Interactive Video)

The Compressed Interactive Video courses had mixed results in 2001-2002. ACTA courses continue to be offered and while the numbers are quite small for the classes, the potential for increases seems hopeful. Courses in Turfgrass Management and Clothing Concepts were conducted by videoconference from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

The Lincoln Western Civilization classes were not requested due to low numbers (though they have been requested for 2002-2003) but both College Algebra and Finite Math were conducted from NWACC to Lincoln. Both classes utilized the Mimio digital assistant tool, which effectively created a video whiteboard for lecture purposes that could be shown at both sites and allowed the instructor to use a normal (if small) whiteboard instead of writing on a legal pad under the ELMO camera. In addition, all of the board notes were saved and posted on the class web pages. Also, the Beginning and Intermediate Algebra classes were offered to the Jones Center were offered in sequence, with Beginning Algebra in the fall and Intermediate in the spring. These classes also utilized the Mimio board. Unfortunately the classes only has 2 to 3 enrollees each at the Jones Center. Due to the low numbers, no classes will be offered there in the fall.

The Arkansas Tech Emergency Management program offered the class "Aim and Scope of Emergency Management" in the fall of 2001. The events of September 11, 2001 gave the class a special significance, although enrollment was low (2 students out of the 5 expected). Arkansas Tech University has not yet proposed any follow up classes.

One additional note: The Presidents and Chancellors of the Two-Year Colleges in Arkansas held a recent meeting by videoconference for the first time. Due to a schedule conflict, NWACC President Dr. Bob Burns was unable to attend at the CEC but reports of the conference were positive and indicate that further such meetings will be held in this manner. Such a use of the videoconference system will help save on travel costs by using an existing technology, already budgeted for, to replace travel cost of mileage, room and meals.

Telecourses

Retention and communication are the primary concerns in the telecourses. It seems that some students struggle with the distance factor especially in these courses, possibly because of the high structure element of watching videos as lectures. A closer and more flexible instructor-student dialogue seems to be a key need. The instructors still are trying to find their way to that kind of dialogue and one suggestion has been to individualize orientations so that students and instructors are communicating immediately. WebCT is still a viable supplement as a communications and information tool. Psychology, Sociology, and American History I and II (to 1877 and after) were offered again in 2001-2002.

Self-Directed Study

Introduction to Computer Information was offered in addition to World Literature to 1650, Business Communications, and Database Management (Access 2000). Rebecca Webb, the instructor teaching Database Management, taught this course as well in a similar style. The retention was not as high as that of the Database Management course, but this may be due to either the introductory nature of the course, and thus the audience or the fact that it was the initial offering of the course and some standard revision and retooling is needed.

The Self-Directed courses on a whole have had higher retention than the other asynchronous courses (WWW-Based and Telecourses). The courses are perhaps more unique than the telecourses and web-based and this may contribute to what seems to be a higher level of dialogue (in the Literature and Communications course) and feedback (in the computer courses). The extra dialogue and feedback seems to help keep students involved in the course. Also there are additional meetings that the instructors schedule or times they offer for students to meet as needed. Examples of this are the Business Communications and the World Literature mid-term meetings.

Internet/Web-Based

Courses in Macroeconomics, Networking and Information Systems, and English Composition I were added to the roster of available WWW-Based courses. An Introduction to Life Sciences was offered in the spring of 2002 but failed to make. A planned College Chemistry I course was cancelled early in registration. I suspect the Chemistry course suffers from the required lab time forcing students to attend class on campus on a weekly basis. Accounting II, General Psychology, Art Appreciation (2 sections), Web Page Design, Internet Resourcing, and English Composition II were the other offerings. Web Page Design II was added in the summer.

Retention seems to be mixed in the WWW courses. It is a concern in a couple of courses, particularly the English Composition I and Accounting II courses. However, it seems to be up and down with better numbers in the fall than the spring. Given these fluctuations it is difficult to point to a specific trend in retention in the classes. However, instructors pointed out some concerns. Early and immediate contact with students who show signs of falling behind or misunderstanding material, and clear establishment of expectations for both the curriculum and the online nature of the class were seen as key strategies in the early part of a course. There was a sense that, in the worst retention situations, students did not have a clear understanding of when they were falling behind or performing poorly. Furthermore, by the time these situations were communicated to the students, it was too late and they had either withdrawn or given up and failed.

Overall growth of classes has been steady, although the WWW enrollment numbers have declined slightly. It is difficult to tell if such decline is a result of the perception among students that the courses are not as effective, a sense that the courses are more rigorous in regards to dialogue and communication required (i.e. students must write and contribute to the dialogue more than in a face to face classroom), the population for WWW classes has dropped, the economic situation has reduced the number of working students who feel as though they can take these classes, or simply the novelty of WWW classes has lost some luster. One obvious need is the ability to acquire a degree via distance learning. This means additional core offerings, including more summer classes.

ACCESS Arkansas

NWACC continues to license WebCT through ACCESS Arkansas/AATYC. The 2002 license saw a steep increase however, from \$1,800 per annum to \$5,400 for the "Standard" edition. The \$5,400 is a discount from the actual new price of \$7,000. The discount was made possible by AATYC who handled the billing process in state for WebCT. While the \$1,800 previously paid was for a limited license (compared to \$3,000 for unlimited) and the present license is unlimited, there was no choice in regards to limited or unlimited for the WebCT product we use. Furthermore, WebCT has indicated that they will cease to support and produce the "Standard" edition as of summer 2003, requiring all users to use the "Campus" edition (at a starting license fee of \$7,000 per annum for a limit of 1600 users at any time) or a newer product called "Vista". The only other alternative is to use another product or system for delivering and managing WWW classes. NWACC must ultimately decide whether to pay more for WebCT or find an alternative. In the meantime we have licensed WebCT until July 2003 in order to maintain the lowest available price. There are no guarantees that the license fee will not continue to increase for future contracts.

ACCESS Arkansas itself appears to be facing difficulties. The grant funding the server and server support, as well as administrative staff, has apparently run out. The ACCESS Arkansas site is not presently accessible except for a page dated March 19, 2002 that says the site is undergoing "maintenance". There have been plans for the ACCESS Arkansas schools to meet this summer (2002) to discuss the WebCT price changes and alternate possibilities but no date has been set yet. Until the ACCESS Arkansas web site is reactivated, there is no central listing of online courses at 2-year schools in Arkansas.

Another difficulty causing potential confusion is that the state of Arkansas decided, for whatever reason, to rename the state homepage "Access Arkansas", the same name as our state consortium of 2-year schools offering online classes.

There has been no further word on ACCESS Arkansas proposed plans to consolidate classes from various schools into a 2-year online degree. A number of University of Arkansas system community colleges have developed 2-year degrees online though.

Classes Planned

CIV (Compressed Interactive Video)

For the Fall of 2002 NWACC will continue to offer College Algebra and Finite Math to Lincoln High School, with the opportunity for Prairie Grove students to attend as well. NWACC will also resume Western Civilization I and II for Lincoln and Prairie Grove students as well.

ACTA courses will continue. The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville has developed a rotation schedule of classes offered to the ACTA consortium. NWACC will be carrying two of those courses, "Introduction to Turfgrass Management" and "Food Safety and Sanitation". Dr. Marvin Galloway, Dean of the Math and Sciences Department has suggested that the UAF schedule set aside particular times for their courses in order to facilitate earlier planning for classes. NWACC is considering an offer of its own to the ACTA consortium but has not settled on a class or medium yet.

NWACC will be offering an Arkansas History course via interactive video to North Arkansas College at Harrison and Fayetteville High School. One concern is offering the class at a time when the likely audience, schoolteachers and education students, can attend.

Telecourses

NWACC will continue to offer Psychology, Sociology, and American History I and II. There has been news that the Sociology course will be updated soon but nothing final has been presented yet.

Self-Directed Study

World Literature I, Introduction to Computer Information, and Business Communications will be offered again in the Fall of 2002. In addition to these, 2 new Self-Directed Study courses will be offered: College Algebra, which will utilize the Math department's IMME computer-based learning software and taught by Math Lead Faculty Tracy Vaughan, and Environmental Compliance Documentation, an Environmental Science class team-taught by Cindy Hammons and Laura Miller. Both courses will require some online activity from students.

Database Management (Access) will not be offered in the Fall of 2002 but is being offered this summer and will continue to be available as the Business and Computer Department chooses.

Internet/Web-Based

English Composition I, Art Appreciation, Principles of Accounting II, Web Page Design, English Composition II, Internet Resourcing, and General Psychology, College Chemistry I, and Principles of Macroeconomics are being offered again in the Fall of 2002. In addition NWACC is offering the following classes for the first time: Art History I, Foundations of Writing, Information Literacy, Medical Terminology. Web Page Design II is being offered again as well.

The primary course development goals for 2002-2003 are to identify and develop courses that will facilitate the Associates of Arts degree. WWW-Based courses will make up the bulk of these courses. In addition, NWACC must figure out a way to develop courses not tied to one course management system or publisher given our uncertain status of using WebCT in the future. One other obstacle to this is the reduced funding for the college as a whole, the main result in Distance Learning being that no funds are available for development of classes.

ACCESS Arkansas

The future regarding ACCESS Arkansas is presently dependent on the status of the consortium and what funding or resources are available. At present, no listings of college classes are available via the service. One possible alternative, regardless of ACCESS Arkansas' future is to list courses with the Southern Regional Education Board's Electronic Campus (at <http://www.electroniccampus.org>).

Student Services

In the last year web registration has proven to be a very positive tool. While there have been no noticeable increases in distance learning classes, the web registration services have provided a much higher level of service for distance students and simplified many aspects of the admission/advising/registration process by allowing students to complete it from home.

Distance Learning brochures have been regularly included in SOAR orientations and Student Services makes students aware of distance learning opportunities on campus.

The Distance Learning Department continues to post updates and maintain the equipment for the on campus video bulletin board that runs through the CEC cable system. The Campus Activities produces and updates the actual file of notices and then e-mails it to Distance Learning. The Distance Learning Department transfers the file to the machine running the board. The file is a PowerPoint presentation.

Training

Training has been reduced to a minimum in the past year, focusing mainly on preparing faculty for teaching distance learning classes. The main types of training have been as follows:

- WebCT training in the use of the course management system, tools, log in, customization, content, file management, student management, and accounts. This session is usually broken into two 4-hour sessions on a chosen day over two successive weeks. The interim time between the two sessions allows the trainees to practice with the system. Handouts are provided.
- Compressed Interactive Video training in the use of the interactive video system, the Mimio digital whiteboard tool, videoconferencing presentation techniques, and videoconferencing class management techniques. This training is usually customized to individual instructors with practice using the system with constructive feedback. An extensive handout is provided.

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: More progress is needed here as the Telecourses minimally use WebCT, if at all. The Self-Directed Study courses produce mixed results, although two planned courses will require the system (or some other web interface) as part of their fundamental design.

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: Training development was pushed back as a priority due to time limitations. Present plans are to use a WebCT based orientation/workshop/seminar to conduct training in WWW-Based courses, Telecourses, and Self-Directed Study. This work will be started over the summer.

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: The use of instructor consent to address section A has tapered off with all but the WWW-Based courses due to complaints that it makes the registration process more difficult. Predictably, retention seems to have deteriorated somewhat, although no correlation between the two has been statistically demonstrated at this point. In regards to Section B, the Distance Learning department keeps a record of all classes by distance learning and can compare the scores and retention of distance classes with face to face classes.

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 continues to serve as the primary measure of student resource usage. The Library tries to measure usage of telecourse related materials as well. Identification of resources and accurate ways to measure their usage must be developed.

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 continue to be made available to Student Services, Public Service Announcements and Press Releases 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 not used given the limited budget for such expenditures.

Local Initiatives and Business

NWACC is presently consulting with an on campus committee and staff from the Jones Television Network in Springdale, AR about producing a television show that focuses on issues of public interest (local, national, or international) and relates the work of the NWACC faculty, staff, administration, and students to them. The show would have to be produced on a shoestring budget, so to speak, so its future is still uncertain. The Jones Television Network has agreed to shoot and broadcast the program for free. The committee's role is to organize the personnel and infrastructure needed to produce the show on a regular basis.

NWACC Distance Learning has met with other compressed interactive video users in Northwest Arkansas, including the educational cooperative, and representatives from local school districts that have CIV capabilities. The main aim of the discussion is to develop opportunities that utilize the videoconferencing equipment and maximize the effectiveness of such usage.

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

See ACCESS Arkansas above in Classes Conducted and Classes Planned for details.

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. The site has been primarily used to host general distance learning information, newsletters, and annual conference information. The site is located at <http://www.ardla.org>.

Arkansas Postsecondary Telecommunications Consortium

NWACC continues to maintain a presence on the Executive Committee of the Arkansas Telecommunications Consortium (Also referred to as the Telecourse Consortium). The NWACC representative was unable to participate in the latest meetings due to a schedule conflict. However, the consortium will still be running the usual telecourse selections for NWACC as part of the AETN broadcast schedule.

State Compressed Video Network (VNet)

NWACC continues to participate in VNet, the Arkansas State Video Network Users Group. The Distance Learning Coordinator serves as Secretary for the organization and also continues to maintain an online clickable map of interactive video sites in the state. The present location of the map is on the Arkansas Distance Learning Association web site at <http://www.ardla.org/nwdemap.htm> and the sites on the map are directly linked to a list of information for each site at <http://www.ardla.org/nwdesite.htm>.

Arkansas State Video Network Architecture Meetings

The Distance Learning Coordinator was invited to participate in ongoing meetings regarding the state of the Arkansas State Video Network and future development of the network. The meetings covered a variety of topics including the possibility of utilizing Internet based videoconferencing standards (H.323).

Other Duties and Responsibilities

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

College and Community Satellite Downlinks

The college continues to make use of the satellite receiving equipment to bring in programming that would be unavailable otherwise.

The events of September 11th led to a number of broadcast events being available involving security and crisis management and preparedness. The American Association of Community Colleges presented a live satellite teleconference on crisis management on November 13, 2001. The broadcast included the President of Manhattan Community College (the school NWACC donated a special painting to in memory of the events of September 11th). In addition to this broadcast, on November 9th, NWACC hosted local water utilities professionals for a broadcast sponsored by their professional association on "Defending Your Utilities in A National Crisis", hosted a broadcast for WDI on January 23rd, 2002, sponsored by FEMA and called "Terrorism Response", and taped a broadcast on "Incident Recovery" for the Fire Science department on September 26th.

NWACC also used the satellite facilities to provide programming for professional development. The National Resource Center for the First Year Experience & Students in Transition sponsored two live broadcasts that NWACC participated in. The first was called "Retaining Students: New Questions and Fresh Perspectives" and was broadcast on March 7, 2002. The second was called "The First Year of College: Assessing What We Have" and was broadcast on April 4, 2002.

There has still been no progress in developing a regular list of broadcasts aimed at general community use and service. Time is needed to organize and develop such a program including the identification of suitable broadcasts, and the availability of facilities to show it to a large audience.

Cable Television

At present the CEC building has complete cable access in 31 rooms. The satellite receivers are also hooked up to the cable system, along with two auxiliary channels. These channels have been dropped into the system on frequencies not used by the Cox Telecommunications and are configured as follows:

Channel 91: Fixed satellite dish, PBS programming

Channel 93: Steerable satellite dish, generally tuned to ARTS or C-SPAN when not in use to receive a special broadcast

Channel 100: NWACC Video Bulletin Board (also called the E-Board) running news and information for the college. This board is a PowerPoint presentation connected from a computer to the system. The board is updated every Friday afternoon.

Channel 102: Auxiliary channel connected to a VCR. Generally unused.

Academic use of the cable channels appears to be fairly limited. However, the system was invaluable on September 11, 2001 allowing students, faculty, and staff to keep track of the news as events unfolded. The primary value of cable is the immediate access to information and news, including local and national emergencies, weather bulletins, and other events of notice. Having the satellite receivers accessible through the system means that we can show events at any of the 31 rooms on campus that have cable, allowing us greater flexibility and availability of facilities, including choosing the best rooms for particular events. For Example, while most events were shown in the Distance Learning Lab, the AACC broadcast was presented in the Law Enforcement Lab.

Committees

The Distance Learning Coordinator participated in the following committees:

- NWACC Webmaster. A.J. McDonald was hired for the position.
- Master Planning Committee
- Web Registration Committee
- Web Advisory Task Force
- Television Program Development
- Grants Council
- Distance Education (chair)
- Instructional Directors

Miscellaneous

The Distance Learning Coordinator provided technical support in converting degree plans from Excel to Adobe Acrobat for use on the NWACC web site.

The Distance Learning Coordinator presented information on the NWACC Distance Learning program to area K12 counselors in the White Lecture Hall on Friday March 1, 2002.

The Distance Learning Department provided technical support for a professional development event presented by Dr. Anita Jones, Dean of Communication and Arts, and presented in the Distance Learning Lab on Friday, March 8, 2002.

Conferences, Presentations, and Travel

The following is a list of conferences and presentations that the Distance Learning Coordinator has been involved with during the 2001-2002 school year.

Conferences

- The Arkansas Distance Education Conference: New Challenges/New Opportunities - January 10, 2002. Attendee.

Presentations

- AETN Distance Learning Conference: Compressed Interactive Videoconferencing - August 24, 2001, conducted by videoconference.
- Brief Presentation to the NWACC Foundation Board of Directors - April 11, 2002

Travel

- AETN, Conway, AR: Taping for August 24th Distance Learning Conference - August 16, 2002

Employees

The following individuals were employed by NWACC in a support capacity for the Distance Learning Department:

- Harry Almond - Extra Help, Videoconference Facilitator for Arkansas Tech University class EAM 1013, Aim and Scope of Emergency Management, Wednesday evenings, 6-9 p.m., CEC 1223.
- Ibrahim Poda - Extra Help, Videoconference Facilitator for NWACC class ACSK 0103, Intermediate Algebra, Tuesday evenings, 6:15-9 p.m., Jones Center for Families, Chicago Room (220).

Conclusion

The 2001-2002 year was a year of modest but sustained growth. It is clear that there are a number of issues that need to be addressed including retention, in particular for the telecourses and WWW-Based courses, professional development/training resources for faculty, the future of NWACC's relationship with WebCT, the need for more videoconferencing usage, and the need for even more types of classes to facilitate degrees by distance learning.

However, with the exception of the videoconferencing, all of these problems are the sign of a program that is on its feet and growing. There is a clear student base that is interested in taking classes through distance learning, and some of whom have expressed an interest in obtaining a degree via distance learning. Furthermore, as Arkansas' budget problems have developed, distance learning technology seems to be a reasonable way to address some of the needs generated by the reduced funds. The Presidents and Chancellors meeting by videoconference is a fine example of the way in which videoconferencing, for one example, can reduce costs. Internet/WWW technologies can do the same by reducing the amount of facilities usage required for classes, and even saving mileage expenses for students.

The budget concerns are of course a potential limiting factor, but as the technology can offer solutions to some budgetary issues, and because much of the expenses are static from month to month, distance learning has a fairly stable budgetary situation. The only major concerns are more unexpected increases in WebCT should we continue to use it after July 2003, and how divisional and departmental budget reductions will affect the ability to add distance learning courses.

The main goals then are to finalize the details of the NCA report recommendations, primarily training resources; develop a two year degree option via distance learning or at least the classes required to facilitate such a degree, increase videoconference usage, improve retention, and resolve the future of NWACC's WebCT/Internet courses platform. Secondary goals include developing satellite resources for community usage and information, promoting the distance learning program outside Arkansas, and developing additional resources for distance students.

The Distance Learning program is approaching a crossroads where new growth will be expected. Such growth is not only possible, but is needed to increase the value of the program for the students of NWACC and the community at large.

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 6, 2002

**Appendix A:
Tables of Distance Learning Classes**

Compressed Interactive Video

Fall 2001

Class	Local Enrollment	Remote Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Withdrawals
Turfgrass Management	1	NA	NA	0
Aim and Scope of Emergency Management	2	NA	NA	Uncertain as ATU enrolled students
Beginning Algebra - Jones Center	12	3	15	0
Western Civilization I	Did not make	Did not make	Did not make	Did not make
College Algebra	10	14	24	2
Totals	25	17	39 +	2

Spring 2002

Class	Local Enrollment	Remote Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Withdrawals
Introduction to Clothing Concepts	2	NA	NA	0
Finite Mathematics	11	9	20	0
Intermediate Algebra - Jones Center	20	3	23	7
Totals	33	12	43 +	7

Totals 2001-2002

Classes	Local Enrollment	Remote Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Withdrawals
7	58	29	82 +	9

Self Directed Study

Fall 2001

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
Business Communications	17	0
Database Management - Access 2000	4	0
World Literature I	16	1
Totals	27	1

Spring 2002

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
Business Communications	20	1
Database Management (Access 2000)	10	0
Introduction to Computer Information	24	6
World Literature I	21	5
Totals	75	12

Summer I 2002

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
Database Management (Access 2000)	11#	?
Introduction to Computer Information	16#	?
Totals	27#	?

Totals 2001-2002

Classes	Enrollment	Withdrawals
9	129#	13

Telecourses

Fall 2001

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
History of the American People to 1877	22	8
General Psychology	22	6
General Sociology	20	6
Totals	64	20

Spring 2002

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
History of the American People Since 1877	19	3
General Psychology	14	4
General Sociology	16	7
Totals	49	14

Total 2001-2002

Classes	Enrollment	Withdrawals
6	113	34

WWW Based Courses

Fall 2001

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
Principles of Accounting II	5	0
Art Appreciation (2 sections)	39	4
English Composition I	16	6
English Composition II	19	3
Internet Resourcing	16	1
Networking and Information Systems	3	0
General Psychology	16	1
Web Page Design	20	3
Totals	134	18

Spring 2002

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
Principles of Accounting II	10	5
Art Appreciation (2 sections)	34	6
English Composition I	16	7
English Composition II	19	5
Internet Resourcing	20	1
Intro to Life Sciences	Did not make	NA
Principles of Macroeconomics	19	1
Networking and Information Systems	Did not make	NA
General Psychology	21	6
Web Page Design	15	2
Totals	154	33

Summer I 2002

Class	Enrollment	Withdrawals
Internet Resourcing	13#	?
Web Page Design	15#	?
Web Page Design II	5#	?
Totals	33	?

Total 2001-2002

Classes	Enrollment	Withdrawals
21 (23 sections)	321	51

Totals for NWACC Distance Learning Courses

Semester	Classes	Enrollment	Withdrawals
Fall 2001	19 (20 sections)	264	41
Spring 2002	20 (21 sections)	321	66
Summer I 2002	5	60	?
Total 2001-2002	43 (45 sections)	645	107

Classes still in session at the time of the report.

Appendix B:
2000-2001 Distance Learning Committee

Clint Brooks, Chair - Distance Learning Coordinator

Jim Barnsley - Learning Lab Supervisor

Troy Cash - Lead Faculty, Computer Information Dept.; Computer Information

Cindy Hammons - Associate Professor, OSHA/EPA; Environmental & Regulatory Science
Program Director

Dr. Conrad Krauft - Associate Professor, Psychology; Lead Faculty, Behavioral Sciences

Dr. Linda Lovell - Associate Professor, Library Faculty and English

Kim Purdy - Coordinator of Enrollment & Data Management

Janel Stryker - ABE/GED

Judith Tavano - Assistant to the Dean, Workforce Development Institute

Karen Tinker - Associate Faculty, Psychology

Dr. Jerry Vervack - Associate Vice President for Learning Programs

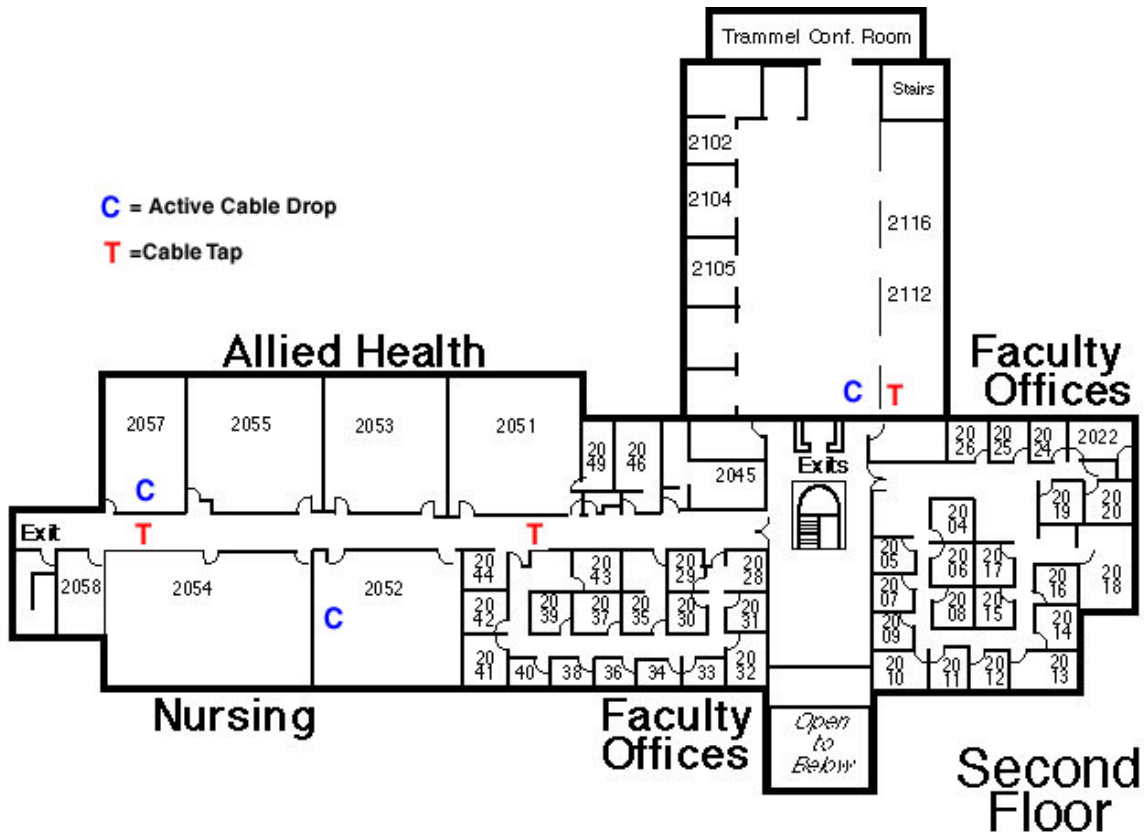
Marjorie Whitmore - Assistant Professor, Mathematics

**Appendix C:
Location of Cable Outlets and Taps in CEC**

First Floor:



Second Floor:



Third Floor:

