

CNI Launches Assessing the Academic Networked Environment Project

CNI selected nine prestigious institutions to kick off its Assessing the Academic Networked Environment Project. Of the dozens of interested institutions that responded to CNI's call for statements of interest and experience, the following were chosen to participate: Brown University, Dartmouth College, Gettysburg College, Johns Hopkins University, King's College London, Mary Washington College, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, University of Washington, and Virginia Tech.

The assessment project's goal is to implement a field-test of the CNI-published handbook *Assessing the Academic Networked Environment: Strategies and Options*, by Charles McClure and Cynthia Lopata. This seminal study provides key research and tools for the higher education community focusing on the assessment of networked information resources, and the impact of these resources on teaching and learning, the provision of information, and the creation of shared knowledge.

To accomplish the project's goal, the nine participating institutions will engage in a coordinated field test of assessment measures outlined in the McClure/Lopata study. Each institution will be represented by an interdisciplinary team comprised of such departments as the library, computing center, media center, and faculty. Each team will design and implement its assessment program. These collaborative teams will then be used to promote and support future collaborations through such methods as electronic discussion lists, Websites, and more formally, project reports that will be widely disseminated.

Another of the project's main objectives is to allow teams to develop skills that will assist them in working as an institutional team. After developing familiarity with other teams, the project aims to encourage continued collaboration.

The nine teams held their first working meeting April 2 and 3 in conjunction with CNI's Spring Task Force Meeting. "The meeting, which was an orientation for members of institutional teams who will be working on the Assessment project in the coming months, was filled with lively discussion and an enthusiastic question and answer session," said CNI Interim Executive Director Joan Lippincott. The teams began to plan campus assessments of the networked aspects of such areas as: teaching and learning; information resources/library; support services; infrastructure; and campus labels.

Christopher Peebles, Dean of Academic Computing and Acting Associate Vice President, Office of Information Technologies, Indiana University, is a Visiting Fellow with CNI and is one of the project coordinators. Charles McClure, Distinguished Professor, Syracuse University, serves as an advisor to the project. Gerry Bernbom, Visiting Program Officer, CNI and Associate Director in the Office of Information Technologies at Indiana University, is the project facilitator. Joan K. Lippincott, Interim Executive Director, CNI, is also a project coordinator.

Louise Ann Fisch, CNI Coordinator of Communications

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