

# **UNC TLT Collaborative Spring 2001 Campus Funding Allocations**

**1. Campus:** North Carolina Central University

**2. Campus office that is to receive the funding allocation:** Center for University Teaching and Learning

**3. Accounting information:** Funds should be transferred to Account # 215531

**4. Project Category or Categories:**

TLT Wireless/handheld computing

Other Campuses receiving allocations in this category:

ECU, NCAT, NCCU, NCSU, UNC-C, UNC-W, WCU, WSSU

**5. Project Description:**

## **Wireless Technology in Collaborative Instruction in Freshman Writing Courses**

**Project Goals:**

To train Center staff, IT/Distance Learning Staff and English faculty to use wireless technology in the Freshman Composition classes

To enhance teaching and learning in collaborative writing in the composition classes using the wireless handheld computer

To engender further enhance the collaboration of faculty and staff among the 16 colleges and universities in the NC University System

The primary effort in developing such a program is to create a classroom environment where students' will be able to participate in collaborative activities designed to enhance their writing and editing skills in the freshman writing courses at North Carolina Central University. Through the use of Microsoft NetMeeting or some other multiple conferencing unit, students in the pilot classes would be able to share and critique each other's work and to engage in collaborative activities for creating well-written essays and other assignments. The use of the handheld wireless devices will be incorporated into the collaborative writing process whereby students will share their writing for editing and revision purposes. It is understood that funding through this grant would not supply all the needs of such a program, but it would greatly facilitate the efforts of the Center for University Teaching and Learning as it seeks new ways to enhance instruction at the University. We will have to purchase devices for students and faculty, but the one's purchased under this grant would allow an identified group of staff and faculty to begin

training in the use of (testing mode) such a strategy as a tool to enhance learning. When handheld devices are purchased, we will need to also purchase kits and wireless cards for them, keyboards for the handheld devices, wireless LAN Access Point to provide Direct Sequence Spread Spectrum operation for a wireless network and access point connections to extend the reach of the network communications capability.

For the beginning year of the project, handheld PCs would be purchased for students in the class, but these would not become the property of the student. These would be used in a class, distributed by the classroom teacher for the period to be used. These would be housed in the participating faculty member's office, and students would have access to them only during class for the trial period. Since the wireless kits will be placed in or near the classrooms in which the handheld devices would be used, it would not be necessary for students to have the devices in their possession otherwise. However, this is future planning. Initially, the 10 items purchased through this grant would be used for staff and faculty training to develop the complete strategy for implementing the program fully in 2-4 writing classes. Part of the task for the grant period would be for faculty to become familiar with the technology and to design instructional activities that would incorporate the use of this new technology in the classroom. Afterwards, some consideration would be given to how students may also use these devices outside the learning environment.

### **Project Design:**

#### **Phase One (April 2001)**

Research technology and software to make sure that the software and hardware are compatible and can perform the desired instructional tasks. Consult with other campuses working on similar projects.

#### **Phase Two (May 2001) All funds must be expended by this date.**

Identify faculty and staff members to be involved. Invite participation from faculty members in the English department and other interested faculty across campus. Design the instructional package, including collaborative activities to be conducted in the classes. Put up the project description on the TLT Web site as required by the grant.

#### **Phase Three (June 2001)**

Acquire, install, and test hardware and software.

#### **Phase Four (Summer or Fall 2001)**

Hold a faculty development workshop to demonstrate and critique the instructional package.

#### **Phase Five (Summer or Fall 2001)**

Test the instructional package in classes.

#### **Phase Six (Summer or Fall 2001)**

**Assess the effectiveness of the package based on the development workshop and the classroom test. Plan and seek funding for wide-scale implementation, if warranted by the evaluation.**

**6. Collaboration with other UNC Campuses:**

It will be critical to develop on-going relationships with other institutions trying this new strategy of teaching, so that the first effort should be to have each involved institution come together to discuss their plans and expectations. Secondly, we should establish a network whereby we can on a regular basis engage in conversations about the strengths and weaknesses of our programs and the problems we may be encountering, finding ways to assist each other. Thirdly, we should plan to host a symposium to demonstrate what we are doing in our different programs once they have advanced to a more perfect state.

**7. Deliverables in addition to those specified for all 2001 UNC TLT funding allocations:**

There are no modifications or additional specific details to be associated with this project.