Promoting the Use of Technology as a Classroom Tool through Wireless Computing

School of Education
UNCG

Rational

In order for faculty to use technology to enhance teaching and learning, technology must be accessible. Typically, our classrooms have nothing beyond a TV/VCR and overhead projector. The School of Education at UNCG is currently equipping classrooms within the building with a teaching station containing one computer system and projection. This works well for demonstration purposes; however, does not allow for students to have hands-on technology opportunities. If we expect to make use of current technological resources to enhance our courses, we need Internet access for students to use in class, not just in campus labs. Wireless connectivity would provide additional flexibility in where classes could meet.

Goal

The goal of the project would be to evaluate the use of wireless connectivity. By purchasing a mobile cart equipped with a base station and a set of laptops with Apple "Airport"Cards, faculty could move the cart into the classroom (or even outside the building), distribute the laptops, and students would have immediate, wireless access to Internet resources. Of course, they could also use the computers for other applications (i.e., word processing notes and reflections, creating databases and spreadsheets, etc.) to be printed later. This project would be applicable for K-12 teaching, as well as instruction at the higher education level.

Benefits

The wireless mobile station would mean faculty would not have to reserve the one computer lab in the building, freeing it for other classes. Faculty would not only be modeling effective uses of technology, but also actually expecting students to use it. There would be little preparation involved in setting up the equipment, which would encourage its use. Students would be using technology skills while accessing current information.

Training

Minimal training would be needed for operation. The Instructional Technology Specialist in the School of Education would be responsible for training.

Outcomes

- Wireless connectivity could be evaluated and results shared.
- Faculty would be trained to use current classroom technologies.
- Faculty would integrate technology to enhance their teaching.
- Students would use technology tools to enhance their learning.

- Students would have access to the most current information.

Assessment

The outcomes would be measured through:
- Documentation/evaluation of faculty training in use of equipment
- Documentation of equipment use
- Survey of faculty reactions to project
- Survey of student reactions to project

Dissemination of Results

The results of this replicable project would be shared through the Instructional Technology Specialist and the Director of the Teaching and Learning Center, who serves on the TLT collaborative. The following information would be shared:

- Assessment (surveys of faculty and students)
- Training materials
- Best practices developed
- Ordering information for replication

Budget

1 Apple Wireless Classroom Bundle	9096.00
5 iBooks @ 1399.00	6995.00
5 Airport cards @ 89.00	445.00

	Subtotal	16536.00
	Tax	992.16
	Total	17528.16

The School of Education would purchase the mobile cart.