

# **UNC Teaching and Learning with Technology Collaborative**

## **Executive Director's Report, March – June, 2000**

### **Introduction**

The Teaching and Learning with Technology (TLT) Collaborative is an organization of the sixteen UNC campuses, established as a component of the 1999 UNC Information Technology (IT) Strategy to focus on emerging teaching and learning with technology issues. The goals of the TLT Collaborative are to support campus efforts to work more cooperatively and effectively under the guidance of the Board of campus representatives. The TLT Web site is a primary vehicle for community-building, showcasing, resource-sharing and organizational change associated with TLT.

The UNC TLT Collaborative began operations on March 20, 2000. It has been a busy startup, driven in large part by the need to make effective use of 1999/2000 operating funds under a tight timeline. This was achieved through strategic grants for collaborative TLT projects and research initiatives, and through a pilot TLT retreat for Teaching and Learning directors and Instructional Technology staff. Now at the end of FY1999 we are still waiting for the furniture to arrive, but feel some sense of accomplishment that we have at least started the Collaborative off down the road of becoming a truly consortial organization. The Board of the Collaborative must take much of the credit – the Board has been actively engaged in the startup, with many members rolling their sleeves up and helping out in numerous ways, and has itself functioned in a truly collaborative spirit.

The following report summarizes our activities these past few months. As we begin our first full year of operation I believe that we are already understanding where the fundamental value of the Collaborative will be in the coming year:

- An agent for change as organizations and programs across UNC increasingly identify the need for shared services, standards and resources, and explore new partnerships and relationships with other institutions, vendors, and regional/global organizations.
- A communications portal, events manager, and common resource for teaching and learning directors and their staff as well as for instructional technology staff.
- A publisher of TLT information and promoter of TLT issues and initiatives.
- As a locus for research efforts and strategic initiatives associated with TLT. Our current priorities include: professional development, course management and content development, assessment of learning effectiveness, and standards (including assistive technology standards).

I am looking forward to working with the Board to serve the campuses effectively in the year ahead.

Mike O’Kane  
Executive Director, July 2000

# TLT Web Portal

The pilot TLT Collaborative site is up and running at <http://www.unctl.org>. Efforts to date have focused on the backend of the portal: design and development of the extensive underlying data structures. This work is being integrated with a comprehensive Information Resources initiative to define and implement a common database/Web infrastructure as well as design standards for UNC-wide Web sites. The Collaborative is spearheading much of the design/development for this larger project, and is receiving valuable staff support from the Office of the President team in recognition of this. *An overview and status reports on the TLT Web Portal project can be found under Collaborative Projects on our main menu.*

The front end design and resource development is well underway and includes the following components:

## TLT Collaborative Projects

All Collaborative project sites are now up and populated. We are using a standard template for all projects which includes:

- Abstract
- Details
- Status Reports
- Results and Outcomes
- Related Resources
- Final Reports
- Feedback/Evaluation.

There is interest in applying this template for general IT-related reporting in the Information Resources Division. Interactive forms are being developed so that PI's can update their sites directly.

## Overall Site Design

The Collaborative TLT site design is intended to eventually reflect the design of the new UNC site at <http://www.northcarolina.edu> This will include design of interactive forms, Web-based communication tools, design/ADA standards, banners, etc., as well as common tables/databases/servers and development tools. We expect to see increasing integration between the Portal for Student Services effort, Alliance initiatives, Office of the President sites, and the TLT Collaborative effort.

## TLT Knowledge Bases

The TLT Knowledge base site is now structurally ready for population. The knowledge bases are broken down into major TLT areas such as:

- Assistive Technologies

- Course Management Systems
- Development of Online Learning Environments
- Professional Development for Faculty
- Professional Development for Academic Technology Staff
- Learning Assessment
- Technology in the Classroom
- Visualization and Modeling
- Wireless Technologies

Each knowledge base is designed to accept a number of categories including:

- Events/Conferences
- People
- Centers and Organizations
- Tools and Technologies
- Best Practices
- Policies and Procedures
- Programs and Projects
- Community of Interest
- Procurement Guides
- Funding Resources.

NOTE that the categorization systems are designed only to assist in common searches; all material is fully searchable by keyword, etc. We will include Library experts in the design and development team as this project moves forwards.

We have a number of strategies to populate the Knowledge bases,

1. every funded TLT project includes a requirement to provide targeted material for one or more knowledge bases.
2. TLT Collaborative staff will be tasked to work with the Board and UNC Office of the President to provide targeted lookup materials that capture important information from each UNC campus (people, centers and organizations, tools and technologies, programs and projects, etc).
3. the Communities of Interest (starting with TLT Retreat participants) will be invited to submit materials. Similar requests will be made to appropriate campus offices.
4. interactive forms are being developed to allow campus faculty and staff to populate the sites directly.

Additional knowledge bases and categories will emerge as we receive feedback.

## **Community of Interest Sites**

Community of Interest sites will emerge later in the year. These will include threaded discussions, chats, showcases, etc.

## **Campus Showcases**

The Collaborative is committed to showcasing projects and initiatives throughout UNC. Initially this will be achieved by highlighting targeted entries in the Knowledge Base, but eventually we will devote staff resources to provide in-depth showcases.

## **Site Evaluation and Usage Tracking**

The site currently provides feedback forms and publishes usage statistics that are updated regularly on the Board's web site. We will add more evaluation components as directed by the Organizational Assessment and Evaluation Committee.

## **TLT Collaboration with NCCCS and DPI**

The Teaching and Learning with Technology Task Force is one of five workgroups developed between UNC, NC Community College System (NCCCS), and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) as a result of the Collaboration Report of the Collaboration Subcommittee of the North Carolina General Assembly Joint Select Committee on Information Technology. Mike O'Kane and Alisa Chapman (Director of Instructional Technology, University Schools Programs) are the UNC leaders on the TLT Task Force.

The TLT Collaborative is supporting this effort by design/development of a Collaboration Information database that is designed to capture information concerning collaborative initiatives associated with TLT between the three education systems. The prototype is under development at: <http://collaborate.tlt.ga.unc.edu/infoform/infoform.cfm>

*For complete details on this initiative, see <http://www.unctl.org/> and select Collaborative Projects from the menu.*

## **State Aid Grants For Strategic TLT Research**

Due the late (March) startup, the TLT Collaborative has been able to apply first-year operating funds to two UNC research initiatives that will explore the most pressing issues raised by the Board and by participants at the retreat in Boone. The timelines and deliverables of these projects will be integrated closely with the related action items of the Office of the President e-Learning workgroup.

- **State aid grant to evaluate course management and development systems and associated strategies.** This is in direct response to the Board request for a

collaborative effort in this area, and will tie in with the Office of the President's interest in developing common evaluation and decision criteria. Funding: \$87,850. Principal investigators are from ECU, UNC-CH, UNC P, UNC-A. The core investigating team will also include investigators from ASU, ECSU, NC A&T, NC State, UNC-G, and WCU; the evaluation and resource development will include all UNC campuses. Funds are to be transferred to ECU as the coordinating institution.

- **State aid grant to evaluate UNC professional development strategies with regard to teaching and learning with technology.** This is in direct response to the broad interest in evaluating professional development needs of faculty and staff, surveying best practices, developing common resources, and exploring shared services. Funding: \$84,000. Principal investigators are from ASU, UNC-G, NCCU, UNC-W and NCSA; the evaluation and resource development will include all UNC campuses. Funds are to be transferred, to UNCG and ASU as the coordinating institutions of this effort (\$42,000 to each campus).

*For complete details on these initiatives, see <http://www.unclt.org/> and select Collaborative Projects from the menu.*

## Targeted TLT Collaborative Grants

The TLT Collaborative Board funded the following collaborative TLT projects during spring 2000. *For complete details and status reports on these projects, see <http://www.unclt.org/> and select Collaborative Projects.*

- Core Course Content Project: NC Alliance of Environmental Science and Studies Programs--Web-based Educational Module Project. Participants are: ASU, ECU, NC State, UNC-A, UNC-C, UNC-CH, UNC-W. Funded amount: \$29,932
- Assistive Technologies Project: Establish IDEA station equipment standards and conduct ADA/technology-related information gathering across UNC. Participants are WCU and ECSU. Funded amount: \$31,040
- Learning Content Development Environment: Beta Test of the Cisco Learning Environment Engine. Participants are: ECU, UNC-A, UNC-CH, NC State. Funded amount: \$30,000
- Visualization and Modeling Project: Workshop on Visualization and Modeling Participants are: NCCU, NC State, and other campuses. Funded amount: \$21,000
- Wireless with Hand-Held Devices – Technology in the Classroom Project Participants are: WCU, NC State. Funded amount: \$29,514.50.

## Instructional Technology Retreat, May 30-June 1, 2000

This retreat provided an opportunity for communication and dialog among two emerging professional groups throughout UNC: Teaching and Learning Center Directors and Instructional Technology professionals. These individuals are most directly engaged in the delivery of services associated with Teaching and Learning with Technology, but who seldom have the chance to meet each other, share information, discuss common issues and concerns, and strengthen ongoing peer communications across the system. Limited funds meant that the retreat was restricted to some 100 attendees. The retreat focused on four major topics:

- Professional development for faculty and instructional technology staff
- Assessment of learning effectiveness
- Course management systems and course development standards
- Assistive technology – online and in the classroom.

The retreat included a significant effort to preserve the results. All discussions and presentations were extensively recorded and the results are posted on the Retreat's Web site: <http://www.uncltl.org/retreat/>. The site also provides participant lists, evaluations and feedback, etc. The material that was gathered will be used to help set priorities for the Collaborative and has already formed the rationale and proposal outlines for two multi-campus research grants, funded by the Collaborative and described elsewhere in this report. These two projects will: evaluate course management and development systems and associated strategies; and evaluate UNC professional development strategies with regard to teaching and learning with technology.

### **Feedback from Retreat Participants Concerning the Success of the Retreat**

Here are some highlights of the retreat evaluations:

- 92% of attendees rated the retreat excellent or very good overall.
- 92% rated the retreat as excellent or very good in facilitating community-building among attendees.
- 96% rated the retreat as excellent or very good in encouraging attendees to work more collaboratively.
- 92% rated the retreat as excellent or very good in appropriateness of retreat for audience invited.
- 88% rated the retreat as excellent or very good in focusing on relevant topics for attendees.
- 89% rated the retreat as excellent or very good in making new contacts and opportunity for future collaboration.
- 84% rated the retreat as excellent or very good in facilitating greater connectedness with other professionals in their field across UNC.
- 84% rated the retreat as excellent or very good in facilitating knowledge-sharing among attendees.

### **Feedback from Retreat Participants re: role of the TLT Collaborative**

Following are participant comments on the most critical functions for the UNC TLT Collaborative (in general the punctuation reflects that of the actual comments):

- Catalyst for new creative thinking collaboration and initiating change.
- Connecting appropriate groups.
- Collaboration and support for issues identified (during the retreat).
- Representing UNC system to publishers and course management program vendors.
- Portal and standard setter.
- Community-building: teaching/learning, faculty, academic technology people.
- To be visible on especially those campuses that are setting up Teaching and Learning Centers to help emphasize the importance of incorporating technology in teaching effectiveness.
- Help reduce the digital divide between small and large campuses. Push GA to recognize TLT in faculty reward systems. Foster collaboration among UNC campuses.
- Information regarding funding/grants Facilitate communication among institutions. Provide leadership for new technological initiatives.
- To follow up actively on issues raised here. To encourage GA's active involvement at top levels in providing guidance to campuses.
- Community Building - Collaborative activities and promotion of these - Information Sharing.
- Legitimizing TLT support and activities.
- Establish communication + cooperation, function as a "connector."
- Keeping the focus on teachings and learning; support; community-building among groups; sharing information; gathering folks together.
- Facilitate sharing of information. Act as conduit, disseminating strategies, best practices, etc.
- Building bridges across campuses; communication portal.
- Portal for communication and as resource.
- To leverage resources available throughout system for general UNC benefit.
- Portal.
- Providing a place where we can all discuss our various ways of solving problems. Being a clearinghouse of results, particularly negative results. If one campus tries something and it doesn't work, the other campuses need to know so they don't duplicate the failure.
- Continued sharing of ideas and encouraging collaborative work.

## **TLT Roundtable and Flashlight Initiatives**

The non-profit TLT Group is the teaching, learning and technology affiliate of the American Association for Higher Education. The TLT Group's services are a national effort to help institutions and individuals improve teaching and learning with the use of technology through national institutes, regional events, online workshops, and customized consultations. These services are current focused around the Flashlight Program and Teaching, Learning, and Technology Roundtables (TLTR's):

The Flashlight Program helps institutions study and improve educational uses of technology while gaining control over the time, effort and money these applications require. Findings can be used to validate good practice, spot problems, and improve teaching and learning with technology. The non-profit Flashlight Program offers a number of types of assistance including Flashlight Online Services and Flashlight Network Services.

Teaching, Learning, and Technology Roundtables (TLTR) are campus discussion structures that are supported by the TLT Group to assist faculty, staff, students and administrators to work effectively together to improve teaching and learning with information technology. Through regular focused meetings, a TLTR can help institutions make better-informed decisions, sustain collaborative change, and develop better strategies for using technology to improve teaching and learning.

The UNC TLT Collaborative is pleased to have negotiated system-wide cost savings and to allocate funds for two year licenses (July 2000 through June 2002) for UNC campuses requesting any combination of:

- TLT GROUP Flashlight Online Services
- TLT GROUP Flashlight Network Services
- TLT GROUP TLT Roundtable Services

The following list describes the selections made by each campus. The Collaborative will follow up and report on results of these efforts during 2000/01.

### **Appalachian State University**

Purchase of Flashlight Online services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$3,740

Purchase of TLT Roundtable services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$1,275

### **Elizabeth City State University**

Purchase of TLT Roundtable services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$1,275

### **East Carolina University**

Purchase of Flashlight Network services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$9,350

Purchase of TLT Roundtable services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$1,275

### **Fayetteville State University**

Purchase of Flashlight Network services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$7,140



**NC A & T University**

Purchase of Flashlight Network services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$7,990

**NC Central University**

No purchases at this time

**NC School of the Arts**

Purchase of TLT Roundtable services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$1,275

**NC State University**

Purchase of Flashlight Network services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$9,350

Purchase of TLT Roundtable services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$1,275

**UNC Asheville**

Purchase of TLT Roundtable services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$1,275

**UNC Charlotte**

Purchase of Flashlight Online services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$5,100

Purchase of TLT Roundtable services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$1,275

**UNC Chapel Hill**

Purchase of Flashlight Online services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$5,100

**UNC Greensboro**

Purchase of Flashlight Online services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$3,740

Purchase of TLT Roundtable services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$1,275

**UNC Pembroke**

No purchases at this time

**UNC Wilmington**

Purchase of TLT Roundtable services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$1,275

**Western Carolina University**

Purchase of Flashlight Network services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$7,990

Purchase of TLT Roundtable services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$1,275

**Winston-Salem State University**

Purchase of Flashlight Network services (July 2000 through June 2002): \$7,990

*For complete details on these initiatives, see <http://www.unclt.org/> and select Collaborative Projects from the menu.*

# MERLOT

*For details and status reports on the MERLOT project, see <http://www.unctl.org/> and select Collaborative Projects. For details of the national project see <http://www.merlot.org>*

## Overview

In January 1999, the initial partners to MERLOT (California State University, University System of Georgia, University of North Carolina, Oklahoma State Regents, State Higher Education Executive Officers) began planning what was then called the National Online Learning Community Initiative (NOLCI). The partners built the project upon a successful model developed within the California State University's Center for Distributed Learning. The NOLCI evolved into what is now the MERLOT initiative. MERLOT stands for Multimedia Education Resource for Learning and Online Teaching (and you are correct that the acronym came first!). MERLOT's mission is to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning by expanding the quantity and quality of peer-reviewed online learning materials that can be easily incorporated into faculty designed courses. MERLOT provides a "gateway" to modularized learning materials that faculty can incorporate into their own courses. Learning materials posted in MERLOT are primarily interactive simulations, animations, and tutorials that will be peer-reviewed and tested in appropriate educational settings.

MERLOT already contains over 2,000 multidisciplinary learning applications that can be accessed via the world wide web. It is both a repository of learning modules and a catalyst for collaboration and communication among people with common interests. In February 2000, MERLOT filed to become a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. It currently operates with an advisory board representing both participating institutions and systems, and the broader higher education and business community. Staff support for MERLOT is currently provided by the California State University and independent consultants. The new MERLOT organization expects to exercise its 501(c)(3) status and hire its own staff once a stable financial base is established. Until then, the California State University will serve as the MERLOT fiscal agent.

## The UNC TLT Collaborative and MERLOT

Following are some highlights from the Merlot initiative to date:

- Coordinated the work of 13 UNC faculty working on four discipline panels (Teacher Education, Biology, Business, Physics). Each discipline panel consisted of three faculty each from each of the four University systems (Georgia, California, North Carolina and Oklahoma). UNC led the Teacher Education. These faculty panels developed criteria for evaluating course content in their area.
- Merlot has now become a not-for-profit organization (Diana Oblinger serves on the Board).
- In 2000/2001, the MERLOT organization will expand beyond the four initial systems/discipline. The organization is adding additional partners (university systems

or consortia) and six new discipline areas. The disciplines have not yet been confirmed. Here is the expanded list of partners:

- California State University
- University of North Carolina
- Oklahoma State Regents
- University System of Georgia
- South Dakota Board of Regents
- Louisiana Board of Regents
- Troy State University
- University of Hawaii
- State University of New York
- Illinois Board of Higher Education
- Virginia Community College System
- University of Wisconsin System
- COHERE Project (Canada)
- CAREO Project (Univs of Alberta and Calgary)
- Council of Independent Colleges & Foundation for Independent Higher Education
- Indiana Commission for Higher Education
- California Community College System
- Tennessee Board of Regents and University of Tennessee
- Iowa Board of Regents
- Jesuit Distance Education Network

UNC will continue to participate--\$25,000 a year for the license, plus approximately \$50,000 for personnel-related expenses (stipends, travel, staff time). The UNC TLT Collaborative will continue to coordinate this effort, working closely with the Division of University Schools Programs which will coordinate the Teacher Education component.

### **Special Events Coordinated all/in part by the UNC TLT Collaborative, Spring 2000**

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| March 23:      | Eduprise presentation, UNC GA               |
| April 6:       | Faculty Assembly Meeting, UNC GA            |
| April 26-29:   | Cisco Training Workshop, ECU                |
| May 30-June 1: | Instructional Technology Retreat, Boone, NC |

# Summary of General Operations

## Start Date

The UNC TLT Collaborative began formal operations on March 20, 2000

## Location

UNC TLT Collaborative  
200 Meredith Drive, Suite 200  
Durham, NC 27713

## Governance

The TLT Collaborative Board is in place and fully functioning. The Board has its own Web site that provides information on members, minutes of meetings, reports, etc. See <http://www.unctl.org/>

## Staffing

We are currently in the process of staffing the Collaborative as follows:

- Executive Director (hired)
- Project Manager (currently contracting for support)
- Program Coordinator
- Webmaster/Technology Coordinator (currently contracting for support)
- Administrative Assistant
- Student/biweekly staff

In addition, the Collaborative will contract with campuses for specialized faculty and staff to work on cooperative projects associated with:

- Learning Assessment
- Technology Research
- Assistive Technologies
- Visualization and Modeling
- Professional development

## Current Staff List

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Mike O'Kane          | Executive Director                             |
| James Bossert        | On contract, Online Technology Manager         |
| Bob Orr, WCU         | On contract, June, 2000. Retreat Coordinator   |
| Chris Brueckner, ECU | On contract July-August, 2000. Project Manager |
| Paul Brinich         | On contract, Web/Database Developer            |
| Hillisha Haywood     | On contract, Web/Database Developer            |

## Board Members

### OFFICERS:

**Chair:** Melvin Johnson  
**Vice-Chair:** Ray Purdom  
**Secretary:** Frank Prochaska

### EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:

**UNC Division of Information Resources:** Dr. Diana Oblinger, Vice President for Information Resources  
**UNC Division of Academic Affairs:** Dr. Judith Pulley, Vice President for Planning  
**University Libraries Advisory Committee (ULAC):** Dr. Carroll Varner, Director of Academic Library Services at East Carolina University  
**Faculty Assembly:** Representative has not yet been identified

### STANDING COMMITTEES:

**By-Laws,** Chair: Chuck Bennett  
**Organizational Assessment and Evaluation,** Chair: Dr. Steve Breiner

### BOARD MEMBERS (INCLUDING OFFICERS):

|  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Appalachian State University</b>    | Steven J. Breiner                    |
| <b>East Carolina University</b>        | Helen Parke                          |
| <b>Elizabeth City State University</b> | Derrick Wilkins                      |
| <b>Fayetteville State University</b>   | Akbar Aghajanian                     |
| <b>NC A&amp;T State University</b>     | Melvin Johnson (until June 30, 2000) |
| <b>NC School of the Arts</b>           | Margaret Mertz                       |
| <b>NC State University</b>             | Joanne DeHoney                       |
| <b>UNC at Asheville</b>                | Chuck Bennett                        |
| <b>NC Central University</b>           | Brenda Shaw                          |
| <b>UNC at Chapel Hill</b>              | Kathy Thomas                         |
| <b>UNC at Charlotte</b>                | Sallie Ives                          |
| <b>UNC at Greensboro</b>               | Ray Purdom                           |
| <b>UNC at Pembroke</b>                 | Tom Jackson                          |
| <b>UNC at Wilmington</b>               | Jeff Brown                           |
| <b>Western Carolina University</b>     | Frank Prochaska                      |
| <b>Winston-Salem University</b>        | Joyce F. Williams-Green              |

## Budget Summary, Spring 2000

| Description  | Allocated           | Expenditures        | Remaining       |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Salaries including EPA Contract positions  | \$88,618.00         | \$88,618.00         | \$0.00          |
| Temp. Labor  | \$967.50            | \$967.50            | \$0.00          |
| Benefits   | \$14,116.16         | \$14,113.67         | \$2.49          |
| Employee on Loan:  | \$9,689.00          | \$9,688.50          | \$0.50          |
| Office Supplies: tech. Books. Misc. equipt.  | \$878.35            | \$878.35            | \$0.00          |
| Travel   | \$884.18            | \$884.18            | \$0.00          |
| FedX   | \$124.28            | \$124.28            | \$0.00          |
| Projection/Screen installation   | \$1,950.00          | \$1,950.00          | \$0.00          |
| TLT Retreat (Boone, 6/2000)  | \$27,426.30         | \$27,426.30         | \$0.00          |
| Maintenance Agreement  | \$294.00            | \$294.00            | \$0.00          |
| Capital Outlays: two projection systems, lamps   | \$13,541.50         | \$13,541.50         | \$0.00          |
| Computer Equipt: Server, laptops/dock stations, desktops, printers, fax, smartboards, server licences, application software, devt. software, printer supplies. | \$64,401.06         | \$64,401.06         | \$0.00          |
| Comm. Equipt: zip drives, still/video digital cameras, media drive, editing cards, wireless hubs, capture cards, scanner.                                      | \$14,965.90         | \$14,965.90         | \$0.00          |
| Collaborative Grants to UNC Campuses   | \$312,437.00        | \$312,436.50        | \$0.50          |
| Inter-departmental transfers: Alliance   | \$82,909.00         | \$82,328.00         | \$581.00        |
| Other  | \$0.77              | \$0.00              |                 |
| <b>TOTALS</b>  | <b>\$633,203.00</b> | <b>\$632,617.74</b> | <b>\$585.26</b> |