

On The Cutting Edge

Showcasing *Distance Learning* in the *NC Community College System*



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NCLOR Moves from Pilot to Production; Enhanced With New Acquisitions

The North Carolina Learning Object Repository (NCLOR) moved from pilot to production on March 31, 2009. The NCLOR is ready to welcome new users and contributors.

The NCLOR team has been busy loading these new acquisitions:

- The LearningExpress, new NCLOR partner, has contributed their ebook collection on Health Occupations, Writing Skills, Job & Career, and Workplace Skills to the NCLOR. This collection will enhance workforce information to faculty across the state.
- Virtual Microscope, a NCCCS online science resource providing microscopy slides and experiments, can now be accessed seamlessly from the NCLOR, rather than the more cumbersome process through college servers which required loading CDs.
- The National Repository of Online Courses (NROC) collection, containing approximately 2,500 quality learning resources. This collection will add significantly to the quality, interactivity, and learning experience for students across our state.

If you would like to visit the NCLOR, go to <http://www.nclor.org> and click on the “Log in as guest” link. For further information, access to closed collections, and contributor information, please contact Dr. Ralph Kaplan, NCLOR Director, at kaplanr@nccommunitycolleges.edu or Ms. Cindy Pannill, NCLOR Manager, at pannillc@nccommunitycolleges.edu.

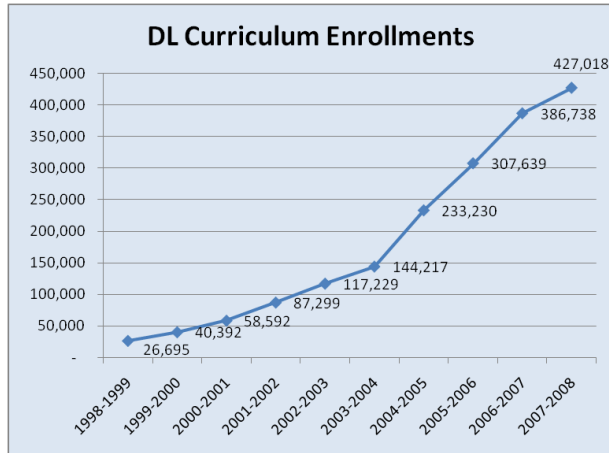
General information and updates are posted on the NCLOR blog at <http://nclor.wordpress.com>.

The Faces of NCCCS Distance Learning

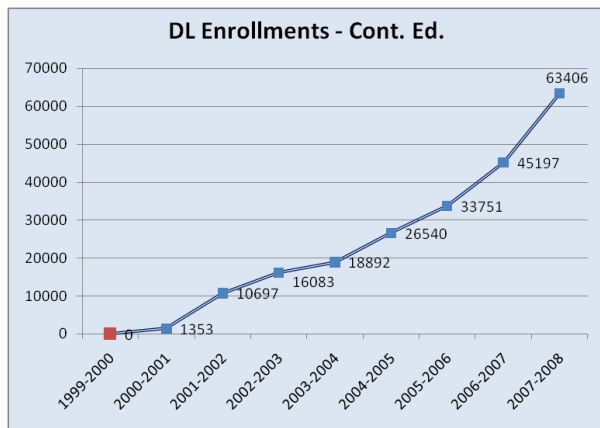
Keeping pace with 58 colleges serving distance learning students in over 490,000

curriculum and continuing education enrollments is an exciting challenge for the distance learning staff in the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) Office. The Distance Learning Section of the Technology and Workforce Development Division provides leadership and assistance to the distance education programs across the system to maximize the effectiveness of these programs.

including the University of Phoenix in the Academic Affairs Division, a business instructor at Catawba Valley Community College, and business manager for the Virginia Technical Information Center at Virginia Tech. Barker holds a Bachelor of Arts in Management Information Systems from Lenoir-Rhyne University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Phoenix.



The newest member of the distance learning staff is Diane Steinbeiser, Distance Learning Assessment Coordinator. Steinbeiser's experience in NCCCS workforce initiatives as Director for Project HEALTH and Program Coordinator for Career Start make her uniquely qualified in her new position to track, assess, and report on all aspects of services, resources, technology, and programs within distance learning. Steinbeiser's goal is to develop a "culture of assessment" within Distance Learning and Learning Technology Systems based on the Baldrige education criteria for performance excellence. Steinbeiser received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs and her Master of Arts from North Carolina State University.



Wanda Barker, Director of Distance Learning, directs the mission and goals of NCCCS distance learning through management of all daily operations of the department, the Virtual Learning Community (VLC) development and support centers, and representation on numerous state and regional boards and commissions.



Photo by Bob Witchger
Left to right: Wanda Barker, Diane Steinbeiser, and Kathy Davis

Barker served as Distance Learning Instructional Designer before her promotion to Director in October 2008. She has worked in education for over twelve years,

Katherine Davis (Kathy), Distance Learning Specialist, completes the distance learning team. Davis handles many communication roles as well as managing educational resources including telecourses, Level Two Instructional Service Agreements, Late Nite

Labs, and several other projects. Davis was recently promoted from the position of distance learning technician. She holds a Bachelor of Journalism degree from the University of Missouri.

Contact: Wanda Barker, Director of Distance Learning, at barker@nccommunitycolleges.edu; Diane Steinbeiser, Distance Learning Assessment Coordinator, at steinbeiserd@nccommunitycolleges.edu; Kathy Davis, Distance Learning Specialist, at davisk@nccommunitycolleges.edu.

VLC Offers Accessibility Training

Twenty-eight North Carolina community college distance education faculty and administrators from across the state participated in a professional development training called *Meeting Accessibility Requirements for Online Courses*. The training was presented by Dr. Candace Holder, Director of Distance Education at Surry Community College. The purpose of the training was three-fold.

First, 30 Virtual Learning Community (VLC) courses were updated to meet accessibility requirements required by Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act and NC Senate Bill 866. Participants learned about each of the 16 standards and how to meet these standards when developing online courses.

Second, the participants learned basic HTML code that is used to meet the accessibility requirements. These skill sets can be used at the local colleges to ensure locally developed courses meet accessibility standards.

Third, participants received training on the VLC guidelines for courses. Each year the VLC course development centers need technical editors. Technical editors are charged with helping content experts enter

content into the learning management system which meets the accessibility requirements as well as VLC formatting and style guidelines. Participants learned how to meet VLC development guidelines increasing the pool of candidates qualified for future VLC development.

The good news is this project allowed local distance education faculty and administrators to become familiar with the new VLC standards and template -- along with the knowledge to meet the accessibility requirements. There were 17 colleges represented in this training and now those colleges each have a person capable of editing online courses for ADA standards!

Face-to-face training was held February 26 at Johnston Community College and on February 27 at Mitchell Community College. Virtual training was held March 11 and 13.

Resources:

VLC Course Development Review Sheet
VLC Style Guide
Section 508 standards handouts
www.ncvital.info

Contact: Dr. Candace Holder, Director of Distance Learning, Surry Community College, at holderc@surry.edu



(<http://www.anatom5.de> and <http://www.natko.de>)

Certificate Programs on the Go!

Johnston Community College's (JCC) Continuing Education Division utilizes Education To Go, an online resource to generate a series of the online courses into certificate programs. Currently, JCC has three certificate programs that can take up to one year to complete, based on the format of the certificate program. For each

certificate program, students must email their online course work and final exam grades for each course taken until the program is completed. A passing exam grade of 85% is required for each course. A certificate of completion is then printed and mailed to the student from JCC's Continuing Education Division. The certificates are ordered and stamped with a seal to illustrate students' endurance and accomplishment.

Currently, JCC offers certificate programs in Management, Webmaster Design, and Business Accounting. Each certificate program has six courses of study. Most of the courses cost \$55. Students just register, pay for each course and Go!



Contact: Paula Parrish, Director of Computer Applications and Distance Learning, Johnston Community College, at parrishp@johnstoncc.edu

Student Engagement through ACA 111

ACA 111 - College Student Success may be one of the most important classes offered by the community college. Retention and student satisfaction research such as the Community College Study of Student Engagement have found that a student is most likely to drop out during the first semester of study. Combine this information with the task of preparing our students for jobs and literacies different from those of the past as noted in the Spellings report on the future of higher education, and the case for the importance of viable, dynamic student success efforts is clear.

At Stanly Community College (SCC), Tanya Davis, Vice President of Workforce and Economic Development, and Jana Ulrich, Director of Learning Technologies, undertook to create an ACA 111 class to provide a cutting-edge starting point for student success. Prompted by the lack of a

text book to represent the diverse student population, Davis and Ulrich began their effort by eliminating the textbook requirement from the class, opting for more personalized, active training materials. They were concerned with the localized perspective of many of their students, and sought to make sure the students were introduced to globalization concepts and impacts. The probability that a SCC student will take an online or hybrid class at some point led the writers to design the course for online delivery so that all students would be prepared for that method of instructional delivery. Based on discussions with the college faculty and their own research they determined that almost all students require an introduction to 'learning to learn' skills, so basic adult-learning pedagogies such as self-direction and choice of learning materials formed the basis of the redesigned class content with an eye towards helping our students' transition from passive to active learners. Basically, Davis and Ulrich agreed with author Ian Jukes who said "We need to prepare students for THEIR future not OUR past."

The results of these efforts have produced a dynamic, fluid, collaborative online course. Students enroll in a facilitated version where they complete the class in a lab where a facilitator helps to keep them on task. However, whether completed from a distance or in a face-to-face environment, the class is completed independently, at the pace and complexity required by the abilities and prior knowledge of each individual.

The course is presented in modules, the content for which is constantly tweaked by collaborative effort between course facilitators, faculty, and learning technologists. Currently, Cindy Dean, Associate Dean of College Transfer, and Myra Furr, Department Head of Humanities and Fine Arts, share most of the facilitation duties for the class. They regularly meet with the learning technologists where content is reviewed and revised. In this way,

students work with content that is topical and relevant to their success.

Evaluations of the new format have been positive. Students used to complain about the busy work and the book used when the class was taught in the traditional way. Now, many are enthusiastic about the course, feeling it does prepare them for success at SCC.

A student testimonial can be viewed from the following link:
<http://sccsv.stanly.edu/streams/ACA111/sccACA111Student.wmv>

If you care to visit a current iteration of the ACA 111 class you are invited to do so using the following information:
<http://webct.stanly.edu>
 WebCT ID = ACAGuest Password = 12345

Contact: Jana Ulrich, Director of Learning Technology, Stanly Community College, at julrich7442@stanly.edu

Biology & Physics Students Use Blogs

Central Carolina Community College (CCCC) invested in Learning Object's Campus Pack Suite in Spring 2008. Instructor interest in Journal LX, Campus Pack's blog tool, was immediate. Jessica Brown, biology instructor and North Carolina's Teacher of Excellence, and Lisa Knight, physics instructor and VLC course developer, were the first instructors to enthusiastically implement the technology.

Both instructors saw an opportunity to enhance their students' learning through group blogging. Knight explains, "I am using the blog in two ways. I have a private student journal that allows me to ask specific conceptual questions and give individual feedback to each student. I have also divided the class into lab groups of five to seven students. The groups are required to complete lab work and submit it via the

group lab blog. This allows students to ask each other questions and problem solve together similar to the way they would in a seated class."



Brown set up a "Bio Blog" for students to interact in groups together. To make it more interesting and to serve as an icebreaker, Brown named the blogs after different phylum. The first blog post for each student involved researching what their phylum was and posting what they learned. Instantly, students began posting pictures and websites about their groups and also began to interact by posting comments to each other.

Both instructors have found that students have developed friendships with their group members. When students post to the discussion, they can easily find others they know and respond. Using the blog for small groups has helped to build a sense of community in the online classroom for the students.

Knight and Brown have found that Journal LX serves as a more modern discussion board and appeals to many students of the millennial generation who are eager to try out new course technologies rather than relying on the old. The appeal of blogging is increasing among CCCC instructors and is expected to grow in upcoming semesters.

Contact: Amanda Carter, Distance Education Coordinator, Central Carolina Community College, at abcarter@cccc.edu

MyLC Quality Panel

During August 2006, Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute, Catawba Valley Community College and Rowan-Cabarrus Community College formed the My Learning Community (MyLC) Blackboard consortia. The consortium is

pleased to announce the development of the **MyLC Quality Panel**.

Quality Panel members are selected based on interest in participation and online teaching experience. Members attend a monthly conference call and collaborate within a Blackboard organization (*using tools such as discussion boards and Pronto*).

Spring Semester 2008, Karen Lynden from Rowan-Cabarrus enrolled in the Maryland Online Quality Matters (QM) Training. QM is a faculty-centered, peer-reviewed, continuous quality improvement process for online classes. Soon after completion, Lynden designed a similar course as a resource for panel members. While this course paralleled Maryland Online's training, it was specific to the needs of the consortia. Combining QM materials, additional research and the collective experience of panel members, the first phase of a peer review system is being finalized.

During the Fall 2009 semester, the panel is:

- Reviewing 10 MyLC classes before the start of the semester
- Piloting an online faculty mentoring process
- Collaborating on consortia-wide professional development opportunities

Quality Panel Members:

Jeannie Morgan-Campola, Aimee Durham, Karen Lynden, Jacque Freeman, Lisa Garneau, Donna Ginn, Carol Hodgson, Mary Kincaid, Mary Noggle, Shelley Palmer, Melissa Reid, Angie Rudd, Jennifer Sime and Donna White-Cook.

Panel members are excited about possibilities of what can be achieved together. For information regarding Maryland Online's Quality Matters program, visit: <http://www.qualitymatters.org/>

Contact: Karen Lynden,

Distance Education Coordinator, Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, at lynden@rowancabarrus.edu.

Contribute to On The Cutting Edge

We know that NCCCS faculty, staff, and institutions are engaged in innovative activities related to distance learning and the use of instructional technology. Consider sharing your activities by submitting an article for publication in "On The Cutting Edge."

This newsletter is published during the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. Deadlines for submissions are usually the last week in February, June, and September.

Articles should be typed in Microsoft Word and should not exceed 250 words. The editors reserve the right to edit for space and content.

Please submit articles to Ms. Wanda Barker at barkerw@ncccommunitycolleges.edu or Ms. Kathy Davis at davisk@ncccommunitycolleges.edu or Ms. Diane Steinbeiser at steinbeiserd@ncccommunitycolleges.edu

VLC Support Centers Working for You

Virtual Learning Community (VLC) Support Centers provide needed professional development, technology vetting and training, and quality assurance for VLC distance learning courses and programs. These centers are in the second year of a three-year cycle providing services to instructors, faculty, and staff throughout the system.

News and updates:

Quality and Assessment Center (Surry Community College) - This year the Quality

and Assessment (QA) center is conducting research on the topic of online student services. A team comprised of members from the VLC support centers, Department of Public Instruction (DPI), University of North Carolina (UNC) System and community college student services administrators and faculty are conducting the research. The team is led by Dr. Linda Nelms, Vice President of Student Services, Wayne Community College, under the direction of Dr. Candace Holder, Director of the QA Center.

The study focuses on what services should be provided online to students. Current theories will be compared with SACs requirements and an assessment will be conducted to determine which services community colleges are currently offering. Results of the study and recommendations for implementing online services will be shared with all student services and distance education administrators. Projected end date: December, 2009.

Contact Dr. Candace Holder, QA Center Director, Director of Distance Learning, Surry Community College, at holderc@surry.edu

Professional Development Center (Wake Technical Community College) - The Professional Development Support Center has created extensive documentation for use in creating learning objects for the North Carolina Learning Object Repository (NCLOR) and the VLC. This includes checklists for content, editing, design criteria, technical requirements, ADA compliance, and metadata; steps for creating an impressive learning object; a template for developing a learning object; guidelines for editing VLC Courses using templates for modules and learning objects, with all learning objects to be contributed to the NCLOR; and steps for creating learning objects for VLC courses.

Training was held at Wake Technical, Catawba Valley, Surry, and Wayne community colleges. Training materials

were contributed to the NCLOR and include Camtasia video demonstrations of the contribution process. The support center also provided training to the VLC development centers at the NC3ADL conference in February 2009.

Participants of this support center are involved in a case study for editing/repurposing VLC general education courses (including CIS 111; ENG 111; MAT 115, 140, and 161; SOC 210; BUS 115; PSY 150 and 241; PHY 152 and 252). Editors are using the newly developed template for their module and including learning objects in each module. The results of this study will generate course revision training for faculty across the system.

Additionally, the Support Center has been actively reviewing learning objects currently being created by course developers and editors in preparation for contribution to the NCLOR. Previously submitted learning objects are undergoing the moderation process. Many of the existing learning objects have been improved and reformatted based on lessons learned. Existing metadata is being expanded based on changes in the contribution process. During March, the director and co-director met with NCCCS distance learning staff to outline plans for year three of the center.

Contact: Dr. Janet Hobbs, Professional Development Support Center Director, Dean of Academic Support, Wake Technical Community College, at jhhobbs@waketech.edu



Technology Center (Fayetteville Technical Community College) – The Technology Support Center has partnered with Asheville-Buncombe Technical, Carteret, Central Piedmont, Craven, Rockingham, South Piedmont, and Wake Technical

community colleges to vet the following technology innovations:

- **Captivate:** software that creates simulations, assessments, and scenario-based tutorials
- **Lifescape:** a computer in a pen that records and links audio to what users write on paper.
- **Respondus:** a tool for creating and managing exams
- **Skype:** software that allows users to make free telephone calls over the Internet
- **Jing:** a supplement to all chat discussions, email threads, forum posts, and blog entries
- **SoftChalk:** software for creating interactive web pages by adding formatting, images, and styles to web pages using basic text editing.
- **Itunes/Utube:** software and techniques for downloading, editing, and publishing multi-media content to CMS
- **Virtual Environments:** computer-based simulated environment intended for its users to inhabit and interact via avatars
- **Avitar Software:** a Web-based virtual agent technology that enables the integration of interactive 3D characters with Web sites and on-line services. Common application includes avatars for Discussion Forum

The Technology Support Center web site (<http://66.39.75.209/>) includes:

- Description of Technology: What is it?
- Hardware/Software: What do I need?
- Benefits: How can it enhance my teaching?
- Process: How do I make it happen?
- Contacts/Resources: Where can I go for more help?

Contact: David Smith, Director of Technology Innovation and Applications, Fayetteville Technical Community College, at smithd@faytechcc.edu

UNC-TV Announces Summer Telecourse Broadcast Schedule

Through its adult learning services, UNC-TV continues to be a strong supporter of the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) and its students. Each semester, UNC-TV airs college-credit telecourses for viewing by students enrolled in a variety of programs.

Telecourses are selected based on an annual survey completed by NCCCS colleges. Each semester, the top 14 telecourses are selected for broadcast on UNC-TV.

Although these courses are selected for broadcasting on UNC-TV, license agreements are required. Colleges should contact the System Office to discuss licensing these telecourses.

Summer 2009 Telecourses:

Advanced English Composition
 Anthropology: The Four Fields
 Biography of America
 Business and the Law
 College Success Skills
 Cycles of Life
 Exploring Society
 Nutrition pathways
 Psychology: The Human Experience
 Taking the Lead
 The Examined Life
 The Western Tradition
 World of Art
 Writer's Circle

Visit the website listed below for a complete list of broadcast dates and times:

<http://www.unctv.org/education/tvforlearning/telecourse/index.html>

Contact: Kathy Davis, Distance Learning Specialist, NCCCS, at davisk@nccommunitycolleges.edu

New VLC Courses Available for Fall Semester 2009

The Virtual Learning Community (VLC) will soon have 40 additional courses in its online library. These new courses will expand the choices for instructors and students at a time when distance learning is in high demand as more students return to college for new job skills and additional training.

The VLC currently offers 226 curriculum and 29 continuing education online courses. There are 27 complete degree programs in the VLC.

VLC development centers were awarded to Surry, Wayne, and Wake Technical community colleges in October 2008 after a comprehensive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Instructors from colleges throughout our system were hired by center directors to develop courses in Blackboard (Bb) Course management System (CMS). To provide greater access and flexibility for instructors, all new VLC courses will also be converted to Moodle, an open source CMS.



A new feature of VLC courses is the addition of interactive learning objects. These self-contained learning objects provide interactive content, goals, objectives, and assessments delivered with the latest software enhancements including Captivate, Camtasia, SoftChalk, and Flash. These learning objects are not course specific and can be used throughout the VLC in any related content area. Instructors can add learning objects to their courses by providing a link in their course to the

resource in the NCLOR (NC Learning Object Repository).

VLC courses are available to all NCCCS instructors. If you have not used a recent VLC course, you should view one of our new courses and experience the interactive learning objects. Much has changed in the past 10 years of VLC course development! To download these course templates, simply contact your distance learning administrator. New courses will be available in June 2009 in Blackboard and Moodle.

For additional information on the VLC, go to the following link:

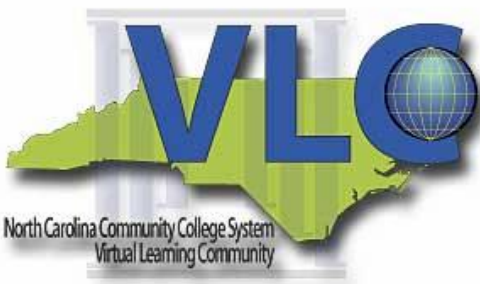
<http://vlc.nccommunitycolleges.edu>.

The following table lists VLC curriculum and continuing education courses currently being developed and edited.

New Online Courses Currently Under Development/Editing	
	New Curriculum Courses
CHM 251	Organic Chemistry I
CHM 252	Organic Chemistry II
PHY 152	College Physics II
PHY 252	General Physics II
MAT 280	Linear Algebra
BIO 175	General Microbiology
BIO 275	Microbiology
EDU 118	Teacher Assoc. Principles and Practices
EDU 222	Learners with Behavior Disorders (formerly EDU 147)
EDU 223	Specific Learning Disabilities (formerly EDU 148)
EDU 235	School Age Development & Program
EDU 247	Sensory and Physical Disabilities
EDU 248	Developmental Delays
EDU 275	Effective Teacher Training
EDU 285	Internship Experience - School Age
ACA 090	Study Skills
ACA 112	Intro to Distance Learning

CIS 070	Fundamentals of Computing
ENG 070	Basic Language Skills
ENG 080	Writing Foundations
MAT 050	Basic Math Skills
MAT 060	Essential Mathematics
	New Continuing Education Courses
EDU 3000	Lateral Entry - Orientation
HRD 3001	Employability Skills
HOS 3060	Meetings and Convention Planning Introduction
HSE 3264	Activity Director - Basic
EGY 3000	Renewable Energy
ANS 3011	Veterinary Assisting
MKT 3438	Customer Service
FLI 3717	Conversational Spanish for Healthcare Workers
MLS 3808	Leadership
	Edited Courses
BUS 110	Introduction to Business
SOC 210	Introduction to Sociology
PSY 150	General Psychology
PSY 241	Developmental Psychology
MAT 140	Survey of Mathematics
CIS 111	Basic PC Literacy
MAT 161	College Algebra
ENG 111	Expository Writing
MAT115	Mathematical Models

Contact: Wanda Barker, Director of Distance Learning, NCCCS, at barkerw@ncccommunitycolleges.edu



Access the VLC at <http://vlc.ncccommunitycolleges.edu>

Did you know:

Online chemistry simulations from Late Nite Labs are used by 18 NCCCS colleges and over 1700 students a year. Chemistry instructors teaching CHM 090-CHM 152 use this resource in face to face, hybrid and online courses.

Contact Kathy Davis at davisk@ncccommunitycolleges.edu for a free instructor PIN. Find out what you are missing!



www.latenitelabs.com

Staff Contacts for Newsletter

The following NCCCS distance learning staff produce and edit the distance learning newsletter:

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