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INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND

EDUCATION OF THE DEAF SYMPOSIUM

FACULTY-DRIVEN TECHNOLOGY:

HOW NTID'S INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY  
CONSORTIUM

BRINGS TECHNOLOGY TO THE CLASSROOM

PRESENTER: MYRA PELZ

NTID/RIT

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>> Good morning. I hope you're all in the right place. Our speaker today is Myra Pelz, who is

the coordinator for NTID's ITC. Our captionist is Kathy. And our interpreter, if we need one, is

Carol. And now the star of our show --

>> MYRA PELZ: Does anyone need an interpreter? No. Okay. Well you can decide what

you want to do. It's a small group, so if you're sitting in the back, if you'd like to come a little closer,

I think that would be nice. I'm assuming that everyone here is here because they might be

interested in setting up something for faculty training at their institutions. I don't need this to be a

formal presentation. Let's kind of have a discussion. Let me know what you want to do at your

institution. Let me know what we might be doing that might be interesting to you. Ask questions

along the way: I'm just a regular faculty member at NTID. I work on the support department. I work

the bachelor level's deaf student at RIT that are mainstreamed at RIT. I work in computer science

and information technology, but that's not why I have this position on the consortium. Anybody,

any of the faculty involved, you don't need to have the kind of background I have. It just so

happens that I was interested in doing this as just an

activity as a faculty member.

Let me just explain a little bit about what we are. The whole idea of NTID's Instructional

Technology Consortium was to get faculty geared up with technology. And what we thought was:

It should be faculty-driven rather than through the administration or through the tech support

people, because we know what students need. We know what works in the classroom and what

doesn't work. So the key words here are faculty-driven and teaching and learning. We didn't want

to divorce technology from the whole teaching and learning concept.

And the consortium itself is just a group of faculty who are interested in doing this and also

have some expertise. They're from every major academic area of the institution. NTID's divided

into different kinds of centers. There's someone from each center represented. And there are

people who confess to be interested in technology and having some background in something. So

we got a guy who is really interested in the Mac. We have somebody else who is really interested

in communication kinds of things.

So we work together and bring these different -- the different expertise.

The ITC was established by the administration in 1997. It started offering its first workshops in

1998. And here are some of the goals. We wanted to

give -- make sure our faculty had some of the tools that they should have, the technical tools or the technology tools, I should say, to bring to the classroom. Kids today are coming to college knowing a lot more than I knew when I first started teaching, that's for sure. I mean my 4th grader is making PowerPoint presentations. And so we need to keep pace. Because if the kids come here knowing stuff that we don't know, it's an embarrassment.

So this was part of our goal.

We also wanted to make sure that we were using the technology in the best possible way for teaching. And for the classroom. So model of excellence for using that technology for our deaf students.

From these goals, we derived several objectives. We wanted to show faculty -- it says -- I wrote introduce but really I mean show. It's sort of a show and tell. Show faculty what different types of technology are capable of as applied to teaching. Include in that how it can be used most successfully in teaching, not just technology for technology sake, but how it can be used in the classroom for good teaching.

And after we've shown them what the capabilities are to actually provide some training in the

different technologies that are available.

Some faculty can write their own -- make their own web pages, create their own flash

animations. Other faculty are still trying inform figure out how to save a file and how to find it again.

I'm sure that you see that yourselves in your own institutions. So for the faculty who can go out and

do it themselves, we can provide training. For the faculty who can only do so much, we also

provide support for projects so that they're not left behind. We can get them started and then

provide a lot of support. So they're more directing the project, but the technical aspect can be

done by other people.

And then we need to obviously evaluate how successful these the technology can be in

teaching.

Okay. When I first took this job, buy was two years ago, this assignment, I didn't know how to

answer this. How are we going to know what technology to bring? And so it has not been as hard

as I thought. The people on the ITC, the faculty members that are in this group are really a great

source of of the kind of technology that can be useful to students because we have different

people in this group who have different levels, different areas of interest, expertise, they know --

they have information on the web, they know about

different kinds of software that they're using in their classroom, things like that.

So if you're going to do something like this, it helps that the people on the committee have

some kind of technical expertise. Whoops, the wrong button.

I'm sure that in your institution, or I'm assuming that in your institution, we have something that

we call in the technical area early adopters. People who are interested in adopting new technology

who are just get up and do it themselves, who go and teach themselves stuff, who without any kind

of motivation, there's self-motivated to learn different kinds of things and start to adopt technology.

And those are the people that you need to find and grab and ask to tell you about what kinds of

things they're doing and they're learning about. And we have some people like that here, luckily, at

our institution.

Then we go to all of the people who are experts. Our technical people, our media specialists.

We're a fairly large institution. We're lucky. We have a lot of technical support here. At NTID and

also at the larger RIT institution. It is a huge place and we have access to all of the resources that

RIT has to offer. So we have people who we can go to and say okay, what should our faculty be

learning? And they're very expert in being able to help

us.

Then we polled the faculty. What do you want to do?  
Sometimes they don't know how they

want to do it, but they know what they want to do. So  
we can then match that up with some type

of technology. Maybe you want to use video to do what  
you want to do.

To be honest, requests from faculty are not as helpful as  
some of the other avenues of

information because they don't know what they don't  
know. Except for Hank, he knows.

(Laughter.)

So they're not good at saying I want this because they  
don't know. And that's what the ITC

does, in showing people what they might want to know.

But we do have discussions with faculty. We have -- we  
have set forums up. Part of it is just

listening to faculty complain about their frustration with  
the technology they are using and trying to

figure out how to help them overcome those kinds of  
things.

And ask them how technology may be working or not  
working that they're already using.

And at the end of the year, I send out Email, this year I  
sent it out the second week of June

and I didn't get very many responses. Last year when I  
sent out the first week of June, we got

more, unfortunately, since the classes ended at the end

of May, it gets harder and harder to get

people to respond. But we did get some very positive feedback about what we've been doing this

year.

And here I just sort of listed some of the things that we have been offering, in case you might

be interested.

RIT has two course ware options on campus. We had originally Prometheus and blackboard.

Now we just have Prometheus. Blackboard bought Prometheus. What will happen to

Prometheus? We don't know. But that's one courseware option for organizing your courses.

Every single student at RIT -- there were probably some sessions about this. Every student at RIT

or every course at RIT has a shell set up for their course. The student registration is plugged into it,

and every student who starts a course can go to this course website, and all the materials for the

course can be placed on that website. That's what Prometheus does for every course at RIT.

Idea tools is something that's just here at NTID. It's a more powerful thing but also needs a lot

more outside support. The learning curve is higher of the but we have both those options. So we

do a lot of stuff for faculty on how to organize their materials, how to present it, and how to best

use these courseware applications for helping students.



The communication aspects of these are very popular, also.

Snag It and Camtasia, for taking screen shots, for developing course materials, that's what

Snag It does. Camtasia actually makes a little video of everything you do on the screen. So, for

example, if you're teaching programming and you want to use it for a faculty member uses it for

teaching visual basic, every time you move your mouse and click on something, that goes into this

video. So then the students can play it back so they can actually have a visual record of all the

steps. That's a really fun thing.

Net Meeting, there was talk on meeting the other day for communicating with students using a

little camera.

There will be photo elements, which is a much more approachable software. If you ever played

with photo shop, you know how incredibly complicated it is. I use it every few weeks. And every

time I go back to it, I forget half the stuff I knew how to do before. Photo elements, I don't want to

say it's dumbed down, it's actually very nice, but it's sort of a subset of photo shop. Word, you'd be

amazed how many people don't know how to use word. I mean people are still using the space

key instead of the tab. So we do quite a bit on it more advanced word topics. Formatting, styles,

how to make tool tests -- cool tests. Instructional

materials that are a little more interesting with graphics and things and also this past year, we did something on how to make web pages from word very easy and how to put them up on the web.

We just showed people the potential of director for doing animations. We don't expect anyone to learn how to use director. It's quite complicated. But at least people know the options there.

Videoconferencing. And then the new OS10 for the Mac with all the I movie and Iphoto and all this really cool stuff you can do on the Mac. We try to encourage people particularly to use imovie which is really simple video software that is just so easy and fun for students.

Oops. So now how do we motivate faculty? Let me tell you that when ITC started in 1978, the first summer, the faculty member took a week long set of workshops, they got a laptop. Well, we had a lot of faculty, very interesting in those workshops.

And we had like 168 faculty members. And the attendance was great. But what happened two years ago is that was no longer available. So we had to come up with some other way to motivate faculty that obviously laptops are going to be a greater motivation. So we were pretty desperate to come up with some interesting ideas. And we were pretty worried that people might not be as motivated. But I think that we've been

pleasantly surprised by how many people have continued to be involved in these workshops.

What we do, instead of the laptops is: We start many things by just offering a demo. We have

a faculty member show how they're using a particular software or application or whatever in their

classroom. And it's very nice because, first of all, it reduces the intimidation factor. Well here's a

faculty member just like me who can use this software successfully, they don't have to be a

computer whiz to do it. So that helps a lot.

The other thing is they can see specifically how particular software is used in it, the teaching

setting, not just in some general way. And it also helps faculty members try to start to visualize how

they could use it in their particular classroom, even though a different faculty member is using it in a

different content area. So we start with demos. Then we follow-up. If there's interest, sometimes

there seems to be interest. But we pole the faculty who have attended and we say do you want to

follow? If so, we follow-up with a little longer session. Three hours, a full day, depending upon the

kind of thing that we're interested in doing and how long it's going to take.

We've done longer sessions on grading software, on word stuff, on photo elements, all the

things that I showed you, many of those, Net Meeting.

Many of those were first a lit one-hour demo

and then a three-hour followup session.

So here's what we did instead of laptops. We set up something called the ITC allocation fund.

And it's a fund to be able to purchase software.

When I went to the administration, I said okay, we don't have laptops. We have to give people

something. I said if we teach them how to use the software, what good is it going to be if they

don't have it on their resident machine? And software is not as expensive as laptops. So we set

up a fund to be able to buy software for faculty. When they've gone through all the training for a

particular piece of software, they fill out a little form saying yes, I'd like to be able to purchase this

software, and they sign it by their -- they have it signed by their chairperson who testifies that they

cannot purchase it out of their department. Funny thing, no one's ever said they can purchase it

out of their department. But that's fine. That's how we've set it up. And we've managed to buy

photo elements, ease great pro, Adobe acro an bat, a variety of different software for our faculty so

that once they know how to use it, they can continue to play with it on their resident machine.

Scheduling training at convenient times is always tricky. Everybody complains. No one's

always happy. But what we have settled on is: Every

week on Friday from 12 to 1 is activity hour

at RIT where there aren't supposed to be any classes. Of course there sometimes are, but we grab

that hour and try to do something every other week or so for the one-hour demos.

Then during exam week, the first three days of exam week when most people are still here, we

give the longer sessions. And then the first week of the summer for the first two or three days,

people are mostly around. It's the first couple days of summer quarter, we also offer half day or

full-day sessions.

And this is the most important -- oh, wait, one more. Okay. Our deaf colleagues in particular

really appreciate signers who can sign for themselves. It just makes the information a lot more

accessible so we do try to do that one. It is not always possible. But we do try to do that as much

as possible.

When we invite people from RIT, obviously we can't do that and we have those interpreted.

And it's better to go to the experts who really know it than people who only sort of know it but can

sign. So it's a balance. But we do try to get people who can sign as much as possible.

This is the one I wanted to really -- this one really helps.

(Laughter.)

People are so -- I'm not sure it's a motivater, but people

are so appreciative. We always have

cook ease and soda during our one-hour things. That's not a big deal. But after the three-hour

sessions, what we normally do is we have a longer session from 9 to noon and then from 12 to 1,

we give people lunch. And one of the nicest side benefits of this is people sit around and they talk.

And one of the complaints that you hear often at NTID, and I don't know if this is true at your

institution, but probably at larger institutions, there's not a lot of community just interaction among

the faculty. We never talk to each other anymore.

And it is just open-ended. But for sitting around eating a sandwich, people can talk to each

other. And people who don't often see each other and don't often interact because they're in

different areas of the institution, they get a chance to interact with each other. Abit's really very

nice. And I think that a side benefit of all this is just a little community building that we do because

the topic isn't always technology. Sometimes it is. But it doesn't have to be. Because that's just

that kind of community building is, I think, a positive thing just in itself.

I kind of hinted at this. We really need to offer the widest range because we do still have

faculty, particular some older faculty, who don't really -- aren't up with current technology and they

need to not feel that they're being left out. They need to

feel like -- hey, we don't intimidate them

and make them feel not valuable. So we offer how to do Email stuff and how to do basic word

stuff.

Or short of that, we try to tell people where that stuff is available.

We also make sure that people know that there are prerequisites for different kinds of things,

so we can do some advance things, but we don't want people coming into a more advance thing

and feeling that there's no way I could ever do this.

This is very important. We have had people who like know so much and they're talking up here

and -- I once remember going to a studio three years ago, this is before I was involved, and

someone was suppose the to present on photo shop, and they spent two hours just talking about

how to set up your preferences. And people were just had no clue what they were talking about.

So you've got to be careful that you don't ask people who are experts but can't match the level of

their audience' knowledge or expectations.

This is something, the hands-on component, that's what everybody always wants. It's fine, the

demos are great just to show people what's going on. But you have to be able to include a

hands-on component. What we do is we have the NLC, you probably have been up in our little

NLC up there. We have PCs and Macs. Right, downstairs, second floor. I'm on third floor, I forgot.

We put people in a room. We give them an assignment or something to do. And then we

have people monitoring, walking around and helping them. Maybe there's a little presentation

component, but there's always a hands-on component where people can try it out and see how to

do it. And then if they're having a problem, there's somebody there to help them so they don't get

frustrated by the software.

There's a lot of other stuff available at RIT, too. And people say, "oh, it's so far to walk to the

library." but we do try to encourage them to do that because we are lucky here that we do have a

lot of more basic training available in other parts of our institution.

This is something new. NTID has not done a good job of orienting new faculty. Recently. But

they have recently geared up again to be able to do that, and we're trying to add a lot of the more

basic stuff to new faculty orientation, which to me makes a lot of sense. So that people coming in

have the basic skills so that we can build on those to be able to develop their skills at a higher

level, to be able to have that technology in their classroom.

Okay. We have a lot of people who provide support. We have a room that's on this floor, the



ETRR, I don't know how many of you have seen it, it's the educational resource -- educational

technology resource room. Thank you. And there are computers in there, and there are also

people. There are media specialists, there are curriculum developers, there are programmers who

are available in this room to help faculty members work on projects. So if you're a faculty member

who knows what you want to do but don't know how to do it, then queue go into the ETRR and get

help. And we have a lot of people involved in that.

Okay. And then those same people come to our workshops to help students with training and

with the hands-on activities.

Okay. This is a hard part, is evaluating. I went to a workshop a couple weeks ago, RIT had its

sort of little technical symposium. And the presenter said, "well, trying to evaluate whether

technology works in a classroom is trying to be central weight whether paper works in the

classroom."

I'm not sure I would go that far. But we do need to know whether all this expense and all this

training is worth the -- is helping students.

So this is what we've been doing so far. We hand out evaluations at the end of every

workshop. We ask faculty what they liked, what they didn't like. Every workshop gets rated 1 to 10

and we ask them whether they want a followup. And we ask them whether they want -- what else

they might want in terms of workshops.

At the end of the year, we ask faculty what they went to, what they didn't go to, why they didn't

go to things if they didn't go, trying to see what we're doing right and what we're doing wrong. And

then as I said, we have these faculty forums at the beginning of the year, although we didn't have

one this year.

Then two years ago, we experimented with flashlight. I don't know how many of you are

familiar with flashlight. It's an evaluation system that's on the web and students could go on the

web and answer questions. And you can make up your own questions or use questions that are

available. And through that process, we developed some questions that we wanted to ask all

students, and we added those questions to the student evaluation forms that all faculty at RIT

have to or are supposed to be using. It's called our student rating system, is that right? And all

faculty can create individualized student evaluation forms and pass them out to their students. And

what we've done is we've added those questions. What technology is your teacher using? Do you

like it? If they're using PowerPoint, what do you like about it? If they're using the web, how are

they using it? What do they like about it? There's a

whole series of questions that we've added.

Okay, here we go. Specific technology that they may be using, including the courseware. And

did it make the course more interesting? Did it help you learn? Did it help you interact? Because a

large part of this technology that faculty really like are the communication tools that are available in

a lot of these things.

You know, I played with, should I say many, should I say most? It's hard to say. But I would

say that many of our faculty have been interested in adopting technology. I had an interesting

discussion yesterday with some other faculty. And some people were saying, "well, now that we

have older faculty in the classroom, we are kind of an aging faculty. Many of us were hired in the

70's. I've been here since 1978, and there are a lot of people who have been here before me.

They're not interested. You know, they've done it their way. Do you need sign? I'm happy to sign

for myself. Okay. So during this discussion, one of the people in the discussion was saying, well,

this older -- the older faculty, they don't really -- they're not interested in changing their methods.

They're used to their method and their lecture, they've been lecturing for 100 years, and that's what

they want to continue to do. And they don't want to add technology to their bag of tricks.

But my argument is -- and what I have seen is that

older faculty are bored. They get bored.

And one of the things that technology does now is it gives them something interesting to do to

learn, to add.

So I think it goes both ways. I think some people are sort of stuck. And it's going to be really

hard to unstick them? But other people are, I think, interested. And as many younger faculty, as

older faculty have been actually interested in adding some things and learning some things just to

make their life a little bit more interesting.

So I think that when I say many, I also mean many different kinds of faculty, both new faculty

and older faculty.

And some faculty are really learning how to make director movies and flash animation and

different things. I mean, there are people who are really sort of inspired by the technology and are

really having fun with it. And they wouldn't be doing that if somebody somewhere hadn't sort of

shown them what the capabilities are.

Okay. What's next? Just real quickly, these are some things we're thinking about adding.

Faculty want to be shown how other faculty are using our courseware. How are faculty organizing

their stuff? Because everyone is sort of encouraged to try to use this stuff right, then they want to

know how is the best way to set it up?

We have one very, very strong Mac advocate on our committee -- two, sorry. Vicki is here, too.

(Laughter.)

Two very strong Mac advocates on our committee. We really want to do more because those -- like

Imovie and those other applications are really fun. And easy. And I think students can really get

into some of that stuff and really make their classroom experience a lot more interactive. And I

think that would be what's really fun about those applications.

We're going to do more on showing faculty, particularly faculty who are not as expert in web

search and things like that. This is more kind of your basic skills faculty member. Show them where

they can find web resources that support their content.

We really want to try -- we have all these researchers on campus, but we haven't really touched

with them to be able to create for us a more formal way of evaluating. And no one's really doing

that very much. So we'd like to do that. We just haven't really done it yet.

We need to work more closely with RIT, the larger institution. And NTID is a technical

institution. We need to be better at trying to investigate new technology.

Okay. I'm done.

Any questions? Good timing. What are you pointing to?

>> The microphone.

>> MYRA PELZ: Does anyone have any questions? I'm assuming that if you're here, you're

interested in doing this in your institution? Any questions about how you want to set it up? No.

Well, I guess -- oh, yes. There's a microphone up here. Loud noise.

(Laughter.)

>> It won't bite.

>> Excuse me. I'm just curious, when you have lack of motivation, say a department is split

and some teachers just don't want the technology and the other half do want the technology. Is

there another way to come in the back door with those who don't and to really try to get them to

work as a team with the whole department? Have you experienced that?

>> MYRA PELZ: Gee, we don't see definite splits like that. But it would seem to me that if the

people who are doing it, if they could show the people who aren't doing it what they're doing, it

might encourage them. Because it really is some fun stuff. And it's not as hard as they might think.

So maybe you need to do it more sort of one-on-one and get -- like somebody from this area to just

kind of show somebody from over there. I don't know. Vicki is on my committee, by the way. This

is Vicki Robinson. She's on our committee. Now, you're in the math department.

>> Vicki: I am the physics department.

(Laughter.)

>> MYRA PELZ: But you're in the --

>> Vicki: Science and math are together.

>> MYRA PELZ: Do you have any thoughts?

>> Vicki: Yeah, we have a split kind of like that in my department. It's not a political question.

Because that changes the whole dynamic. But it's a matter of interest and wanting to invest the

time and the effort and that kind of thing. About half of us are really trying everything. And the

others are saying "well, no, yeah, the web is nice. And I found some nice pages. And I do like that

new copier."

Laughter. That's cool. Things like that. And mostly how it works with us is that those of us

that are really interested and self-motivated to get into these things just do them. And do that.

"come here, look what I'm doing here. Is that something you could use?"

"you know, I found this, and it's not really working for me, but I thought with you with your

algebra class, it seems more suited for that than my physics class."

That kind of thing. And they go Hmm, is that hard?

Sometimes you have to say well, yeah,

kind of.

(Laughter.)

But I bet so-and-so up here could give you a hand, that kind of thing.

We've had more and more people in that department sort of slowly putting their toe in the

water and finding out that it actually feels pretty good and getting deeper and deeper in.

>> MYRA PELZ: The other thing you could try, if you just ask somebody in the department

who is using the technology just to do a show and tell about what they're doing and then give them

food.

(Laughter.)

No, I'm serious. Provide lunch. Say "come to this thing. This person's going to demo this

thing. And then having a nice lunch for them at the end of it, I think you'd be surprised that people

are really well that's kind of cool. Then you need to give a lot of support so people don't feel that

you've shown them something that they can never do. So that's kind of the approach we've taken

is demo and then eat.

(Laughter.)

Hank?



>> Hank: Also eat and then demo. Works.

In our department, we have -- I'm in business. We have a variety of interest. Some people, er,

and some people are really motivated. But we have a history of sharing information and papers

and things. And slowly what's happening is we're sharing files and sharing ideas. And we have

two people who are really very deep, not me, very deep into this. And they are sharing back and

forth. And then they both kind of give me a little bit of it. Oh, I can do that. So it's really, if you can

encourage the sharing part of the activity, or somebody -- well, I'm an accountant, so somebody

who would want to come into class and show me this. Well, one person's into video. I'm not ready

for video. But they have some done some really nice things with excel, and then I say oh, I could

get into some of that in my class.

So I agree with her. One of the best ways is to share, to get the person who is doing

something to show them. And you can start -- we have one person who is very skilled, and he's

always saying "hey." and if we could stop him long enough to show us the little bit.

>> MYRA PELZ: That's part of the problem, too. I can't wait to see that accounting video.

That must be fascinating (laughter? . (.

>> Hank: You better talk to Allen because it's not in my

class.

>> MYRA PELZ: Accounting video.

>> Hank: Well he, actually I think what he's building is a library of terms. And little short videos

to demonstrate the ideas. Anybody who knows sign language that knows that cost and expense

are so close and students don't understand the difference. So technical vocabulary is a very

complex issue for us. And we try everything to do it. Including grabbing them by the throat and

throwing them against the -- no, not really.

(Laughter.)

>> MYRA PELZ: Are there any other questions? No? All right. Well then thank you very

much for coming.

There is a handout.

>> Hank: If you can give your evaluation form. There are handouts here if you need copies.

There are also a blue and green form in your bag and we have copies here which are suggestions

for the future and overall evaluations.

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