ATT VII

SOUTH CAROLINA
Commission on
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Rayburn Barton
Executive Director

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MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Dalton B. Floyd, Jr., Chairman, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

From: Ms. Dianne Chinnes, Chairman, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Consideration of Annual Report for South Carolina Instructional Technology Incentive Grants, FY 1999-2000

Background

In 1999, the General Assembly appropriated $500,000 for the purpose of providing small grants to public institutions of higher education to support the development of technology-delivered coursework. In turn, the Commission issued a call for proposals that were due from the institutions by September 30. In view of the widespread need for support of technology-delivered coursework across many higher education institutions, the program *Guidelines* stated that the terms of the awards would not exceed one year and the amount of a single award would not exceed $12,000. In order to foster collaboration and cooperation among institutions, the guidelines provided that inter-institutional and system-wide awards would not exceed $25,000.

The Commission received 67 proposals from 22 institutions totaling slightly over $700 thousand. The breakdown of the number of proposals by type of institutions is as follows:

Research Universities.....22
Comprehensive Teaching Universities.....24
Technical Colleges.....20
USC Regional Campuses.....1

All proposals were sent to three evaluators, at least one of whom was from out-of-state. Proposals were evaluated by all readers according to ten equally

weighted criteria that were described in the *Guidelines*. The readers' scores for each proposal were totaled and the proposals were ranked in descending order. Readers' comments were also noted and, although no scores were changed based on those comments, conversations were held with some of those submitting proposals and the amounts awarded for several grants were adjusted. The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing recommended, and the Commission approved, funding 47 grants with the $500,000 appropriated for the South Carolina Instructional Technology Incentive (SCITI) grant program.

The 47 grants that were awarded (see attached table) came from 18 of the 22 institutions submitting proposals. Three grants represented collaborative efforts, one within the University of South Carolina system, one within the technical college system, and one involving Clemson University and two technical colleges. Although the majority of the funded proposals (37) involved the development of traditional courses into technology-based distance courses, seven of the grants upgraded already existing distance education courses through technological enhancement or use of a new delivery system and three of the grants were used to develop totally new courses using distance education technology. All courses that were funded were to be offered no later than the summer of 2001.

Evaluation Process

Grantees were requested to submit narrative reports at the conclusion of the development phase of the course (or upon completion of enhanced materials). In this report, they were to include positive and negative learning experiences during course development, listing unanticipated problems and describing modifications that were made to the instructional design plan outlined in the proposal. They were also asked to indicate whether the experience made them want to develop additional courses using instructional technology and, if so, what they would do differently. A copy of the course syllabus was to be enclosed. An interim or final financial report was also to be included, depending on whether all funds had been spent or whether some were being used for the evaluation.

After the course was delivered the first time, grantees were required to submit "follow-up" evaluation reports and, if one had not been submitted, a final financial report. The evaluation reports were to indicate during what semester(s) and/or summer sessions the course was offered and provide enrollments and sites. The results of all evaluations (e.g. questionnaires, focus groups, analysis of comparative data, findings of consultants) described in the evaluation plans of their course proposals were to be included. A number of the reports described changes that were being made in course strategies or materials as a result of the evaluations. Finally, grantees indicated if they had or intend to prepare a presentation or article based on their work on this grant and some enclosed copies.

Results and Findings

Of the 47 projects funded, 43 have been completed with final reports submitted and refunds of any unspent monies received. One project at Clemson University was not attempted; all funds for that project were returned to the Commission.[1] Two other projects at Clemson were completed, but course enrollments did not materialize when the courses were offered within the project deadlines.[2] The remaining project, an updating of an existing course, is still in the final production stage at the University of South Carolina and will be offered during the fall semester of 2002.

As might be expected with 47 projects, the quality of reporting varied. Five project directors or co-directors left their institutions before projects and/or reports were completed and one died before the final report was completed. Although their projects and/or reports were completed by others, the reports for these projects tend to be less complete. Nevertheless, a review of all of the reports reveals problems, achievements, weaknesses, and strengths common to many of the projects, as follows:

1. **The development of a technologically-based course was a new and challenging experience for many of the faculty who received SCITI grants.** The majority commented on the "learning curve" they faced and the amount of time it took to develop and implement such courses. Fortunately, most of them also found it a rewarding experience and indicated that they have developed or would like to develop more such courses.

2. **Like faculty, many students were challenged by both the technology and the difference in pedagogy required for the successful presentation of technology based courses.** It was important to design orientation sessions that dealt with both the technology and the teaching/learning process. Successful on-line courses also invariably made heavy use of discussion boards, chat rooms, or other devices to maintain interconnection among students as well as with the instructor. Many faculty indicated that some students simply were not suited for certain types of distance education courses.

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[1] To date, a total of $28,587.05, including $9,000.00 from the one project that was not attempted has been returned to the Commission. Only one of the Clemson projects that is holding funds for course evaluation has not yet provided a final financial report. It appears that it may have funds to return.

[2] Both courses have been offered again during the spring, 2002 semester. One, however, still had insufficient enrollment. This problem is addressed later in the report.

3. **Due to the rapidly evolving nature of hardware, software, and technology support services, a large number of faculty encountered unanticipated problems with their projects.** Servers went down, institutions adopted new software after much of the coursework had been developed, installation of anticipated software was delayed, and transmission lines failed in the middle of classes. Although faculty generally were amazingly flexible, such problems caused frustration and made some courses less effective than they otherwise would have been.

4. **Perhaps the greatest strength of technology-based courses is the access they provide to students who are working, disabled, or have scheduling conflicts with required or critical courses.** There were many student comments indicating that they could not have taken a course had it not been offered through distance education.

5. **Problems with admission, registration and/or cost discouraged some students at two universities from registering for courses in which they had indicated a strong interest.** Admission and registration problems have apparently been addressed. Of particular concern, however, is the limited enrollment in some courses and the cancellation of others at Clemson due to the high per-credit-hour cost (a three credit hour graduate course at Clemson costs $543 for in-state and $1,398 for out-of-state students).

Project directors presented at least 19 talks or articles based on their experiences developing or implementing SCITI funded courses or materials, and the final reports indicated that further presentations or articles were planned. A project on which USC-Columbia, USC-Aiken, and USC-Spartanburg collaborated to develop a web-based nursing research course received the Outstanding Continuing Education Cooperative Award from the South Carolina Association for Continuing Higher Education, and a project developed at USC-Lancaster won the Distinguished Project Award from the Region VII Association for Continuing Higher Education. A Medical University of South Carolina project entitled "Web Delivery of Digitized 3-Dimensional Videos of Cadaver Anatomical Structures" that was rated first by the reviewers produced 382 video clips that have been made available free of charge to all State colleges and universities; eight institutions are now collaborating with MUSC, and the project director is seeking additional funding at the national level to create other databases in the field of anatomical sciences.

One project director and faculty member's statement sums up the positive result of many of the projects: "It is odd to me now, to see that I wasn't even aware of the impact that this technology of teaching might have on me as a writer, reader, and teacher. ...Now that the 'project' is over, it might be said that I learned more, much more than my students did that semester. I bring that new knowledge into my classroom everyday. Every course I teach is a web, not just an expensive laboratory or an electronic notebook, but a dynamic chaotic color-filled community of readers and writers."

Recommendations

The Committee recommends that the Commission accept this report for information only and that the staff be authorized to continue follow-up on the three projects for which the evaluation component is incomplete.

cc: Attachment

Attachment 1

SOUTH CAROLINA INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY INCENTIVE GRANTS
PROPOSALS RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING
1999-2000

	Institution	Project Title	Amount
1	MUSC	Web Delivery of Digitized 3-Dimensional Videos of Cadaver Anatomical Structures	$12,000
2	USC-Spartanburg	Human Growth & Development	$9,616
3	USC-Lancaster	Distance Learning Women's Studies 111 in the USC System	$11,993
4	Florence-Darlington Tech	Criminal Justice On-line	$11,500
5	York Tech	ACC 101 On-Line	$7,000
6	Lander	RN to BSN Completion Program	$12,000
7	USC-Columbia	Marine Science 111 Offered via Multimedia Presentation and Teleconferencing to High Schools for Advanced Credit	$12,000
8	Trident Tech	e-Commerce Online Certificate Program	$10,287
9	Coastal Carolina	Sociology 450, Victimology, Independent Distance Learning	$7,637
10	Clemson	SC Life Topics for Teachers	$9,070
11	USC-Columbia	A Collaborative Approach to Designing a Web-based Nursing Research Course	$25,000
12	USC-Aiken	Transforming APLS 374 Introduction to Public Policy into a Web Course	$6,595
13	USC-Columbia	Wonderful Pages: Sharing Picture Books with Young Children	$12,000
14	Clemson	Development of context-specific, Internet based course in Nutrition	$11,240
15	Piedmont Tech	Development of African-American History as an Internet Course	$5,640
16	Piedmont Tech	Designing Blueprint and G.D.T. Classes for PEN System	$11,456
17	USC-Spartanburg	SEGL 459 Advanced Rhetoric and Composition	$9,314
18	Piedmont Tech	Restructuring Spanish I and II as Teleclasses	$9,921
19	USC-Columbia	Technology Enhancement of the Introductory Psychology Course (PSYC 101)	$9,086
20	USC-Spartanburg	Environmental Geology of South Carolina	$9,314
21	Denmark Tech	Design, Development, and Implementation of an Internet Enhanced Early Childhood Education Course (ECD 131)-"Language and Arts"	$11,058
22	USC-Columbia	Health Care Economics Instruction via CD-Rom and the World Wide Web	$11,957
23	Clemson	Development of Fiber Physics Course in Asynchronous Format	$9,000
24	MUSC	BHS 478 Senior Practicum: A capstone experience for undergraduate allied health students	$7,757
25	Tri-County Tech	Veterinary Technology via Distance Education	$5,940
26	USC-Columbia	Statistics for Quality Improvement	$11,583
27	Spartanburg Tech	Business Law Video Course (BUS 121)	$11,350
28	USC-Columbia	CLIS 721J (Seminar in School Media Programs)	$11,984

29	USC-Spartanburg	SHST 323—Our Past: Upstate History	$10,114
30	USC-Spartanburg	A Contemporary Literature offered by Contemporary Technology	$9,314
31	USC-Spartanburg	Introduction to Research in Education	$11,500
32	Coastal Carolina	EDUCATION 725 Principles of Curriculum Construction	$12,000
33	Coastal Carolina	Biology of Aging	$9,000
34	Piedmont Tech	A Proposal for Utilizing Distance Learning Technology in the Teaching of Art History and Appreciation	$5,327
35	Clemson	HRD 845 (Needs Assessment)	$10,000
36	USC-Columbia	Enhancing Distance Education for Rural Rehabilitation	$8,907
37	Central Carolina	NUR 201 Transition Nursing	$9,000
38	Piedmont Tech	Development of Internet Version of ENG 202	$6,398
39	College of Charleston	Distance Education CSCI 102	$9,900
40	USC-Aiken	Reading in the Secondary School	$7,086
41	USC-Columbia	Using CD-ROM Technology to Enhance Instruction in Clinical Phonology	$11,966
42	USC-Columbia	Telecommunications of The Teacher as Instructional and Professional Leader	$12,000
43	Clemson	Development of HORT/FOR 309 Arboriculture in Asynchronous Format	$25,000
44	Coastal Carolina	EDUCATION 706 Human Development and Learning Situations	$12,000
45	USC-Spartanburg	SGIS 366-Art & Politics	$9,014
46	Midlands Tech	Delivering Rich Asynchronous Media Assets (DRAMA)	$20,250
47	USC-Columbia	The Development of a Distance Education Calculus-based Introductory Physics	$7,926
		TOTAL	$500,000