

Mellon Development Grant Proposal

Dr. Esther Oey and Dr. Jim Shuman

Department of Education

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1. **Title:**
"Enhancing Portfolio Evaluation of Student Teachers Using Technology"
2. **Project Goals**
 - Allow students to build technology skills useful for teaching in the schools while also demonstrating achievement of standards in teacher education.
 - Establish a way to create digitized portfolios useful for evaluating student achievement in student teaching, building a library of exemplary portfolios for use in the future, and assessing effectiveness in meeting state and national standards in teacher education.

3. **Descriptive Narrative**

In the past decade, performance assessment has become an increasingly standard practice in education, not only for students in schools but also for the school teachers themselves. Rather than relying solely on tests or other "paper/pencil" types of evaluation instruments, educators now define, assign, and evaluate specific tasks (or performances) aligned with the educational standards to be achieved by students. In the case of student teaching, such tasks expect that the student should be able to demonstrate performance as a regular teacher in the public school classroom. While a part of such performance can be accomplished through the exhibition of "products" such as lesson plans, sample tests, journal reflections on practice, and the like, the use of video-taped vignettes from the student teacher's actual classroom teaching, photographs of student activity, and scanned examples of student work add a significant dimension to the evaluation of student teacher performance.

In the past eight years, student teachers at St. Lawrence have been asked to provide a "presentation portfolio" of their work as new teachers, but they have struggled when faced with the prospect of incorporating videotapes, photographs, and examples of student work in them. In addition, the students' final products have been massive three-ring binders that they take with them as soon as they leave the program, using the portfolios for job interviews and the like. This creates problems both for the students as well as the faculty of the teacher education program. The students are troubled because the binders are large and bulky, and they must leave them behind with prospective employers after a day of interviewing. Because each student has only one hard copy portfolio, it is difficult to leave it behind, both because it is a valuable commodity and because s/he may have other interviews shortly thereafter. The faculty members are

troubled because their main source of evidence of student learning leaves the university with the student, making it difficult to provide exemplars to future students or to conduct full and complete program evaluation.

Clearly, the advent of accessible CD technology presents an opportunity to overcome these problems. It would be far better if student portfolios could be created in an electronic format capable of storing video clips, color images, and scanned material. While the Education Department currently maintains a video editing lab, it does not have sufficient resources to assure that up to 30 students per semester can create CD-based electronic portfolios, copies of which could be disseminated easily and left with the faculty at the same time. This proposal seeks to take advantage of this new technology and infuse it into the teacher education program at St. Lawrence.

4. Resources Needed

Equipment

1 Video Editing Station (Computer/VCR/CD Burner)	\$1800 ¹
1 CD Burner for existing Video Editing Station	155 ²
1 Color Scanner	250
1 Digital Camcorder	<u>750</u>
subtotal	\$2955

Student Assistance

2 student assistants for 20 hrs per week @\$7/hr. for 2 wks.	\$ 560
1 student assistant for an add'l week (20 hrs.)	<u>\$ 140</u>
subtotal	\$ 700
total	\$3655

5. Anticipated Outcomes

Student portfolios will be created and available in entirely digital form. This provides advantages both to students and to the university.

The advantages for students are that the digitized portfolios can demonstrate to prospective employers the student's level of expertise in instructional technology while also providing a clear picture of their preparation and abilities as a new teacher. In addition, students will be able to make multiple copies of their portfolios and distribute them easily, instead of having only one hard copy to provide to many different prospective employers.

¹ The department currently has two video editing stations. One more is needed to avoid traffic jams at the close of each semester.

² One of the two current machines is lacking a CD burner. The other is not.

The advantages to university faculty are that the new equipment can be used to teach future students about the uses of technology in teaching and help them stay on the cutting edge of technology in the schools. In addition, the education department will be able to create a digitized multimedia library of portfolio exemplars for use in subsequent semesters. This will allow students to see models of instruction and evaluation. Currently, such models are not available to the students, because they take their own hard copy with them upon graduation. When students can see exemplars from the past, they will build on them, thereby improving the models in variety, sophistication, and effectiveness. This growing library of exemplars can be used in assessing the quality of instruction and the levels of student achievement in the teacher education program.

6. Summary of Curricular Impact

The overarching curricular impact of the project will be that students' ability to demonstrate their learning will be enhanced. While the project will not create any new courses, it will assure that students in education will remain abreast of new developments in technology, a factor that will aid them as new teachers in the profession. In addition, the project will help the education department to assess the effectiveness of its own curriculum and demonstrate how it is meeting standards for teacher education.