

**Learning  
Communities  
Initiative**

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**Learning From Experience: “Developing Portraits of Practice:  
CASE RECORDS”**

**A. Project Title:** *Your kingdom for a few words?*

**Title:** Technical Literacy for Graduate Scholar-Teachers  
**Submitted by:** Connie Molnar, Bowling Green State University

**B. Project Overview:** *Tell the world what you’re doing. 75 Words or less!*

The CTLT grant project is to explore a new approach to the development and delivery of online learning materials to graduate students through the creation and presentation of a series of online teaching modules that focus on the integration of technology into scholarship practices. Each module will be an independent piece of a “whole”; that is, an entire online seminar will be developed based on a modular design perspective, with individual pieces or modules of the seminar developed as independent entities. This type of design is applicable to any topic; however, for the purposes of this grant, a model will be created with the intent to develop a technology competency for graduate students. The course content for this project is distinct in that it will focus on technological *concepts* rather than specific tools. In addition, graduate students will apply these concepts to projects that will be included in a capstone eportfolio event.

Working with the Graduate College, OLN learning community members will develop and deliver the course modules and will document the modular design process from conception to delivery. A pilot program will be launched in the fall of 2003 for a graduate learning community specifically developed for the purpose of this grant. Graduate students who complete the program will gain a proficiency in technology applications and skills that will allow them to become technology literate faculty of the future.

**C. Case Recorder(s):** Identify the person(s) preparing the case record on behalf of the LC.  
*Who are you?*

Dan Madigan, Director, Center for Teaching, Learning & Technology  
Connie Molnar, Assistant Director, Center for Teaching, Learning & Technology

**D. Learning Community Members, units, roles:**

List your community members, their units or disciplines, and roles in the LC. *Who are core members and associates (key people involved in the community project other than core members) of your LC? What experiences do each bring to the community and project?*

| Community Member Name                  | Unit/ Title   | Role/s in the Community   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. <b>Connie Molnar</b>                | <b>Asst Director, CTLT</b>                            | <b>Team lead, content developer, module instructor</b>                                  |
| 2. <b>Dan Madigan</b>                  | <b>Director, CTLT</b>                                 | <b>Expertise in online course development, content developer, module instructor</b>     |
| 3. <b>Terry Herman</b>                 | <b>Director, Distance Learning</b>                    | <b>Expertise in DL, online course development, content developer, module instructor</b> |
| 4. <b>Cathi Cardwell</b>               | <b>Coordinator of Library Ed/Asst Professor</b>       | <b>Expertise in cataloging/metadata, content developer, module instructor</b>           |
| 5. <b>Gwen Evans</b>                   | <b>Library Associate</b>                              | <b>Online course delivery expertise, content developer, module instructor</b>           |
| 6. <b>Kristine Blair</b>               | <b>Associate Professor, English</b>                   | <b>Expertise in online course delivery, faculty consultant, instructor</b>              |
| 7. <b>Michael Thompson</b>             | <b>Instructional Designer, CTLT</b>                   | <b>Lead for development sub-team, content developer, technical consultant</b>           |
| 8. <b>Savilla Banister</b>             | <b>Asst Professor, Div of Teaching &amp; Learning</b> | <b>Expertise in online course delivery, faculty consultant, content developer</b>       |
| 9. <b>Barb Peck (associate)</b>        | <b>Graduate College, GRADStep director</b>            | <b>Liason with Graduate College; assist with project implementation and review</b>      |
| 10. <b>Matt Wilber</b>                 | <b>External consultant</b>                            | <b>Developer</b>  |
| 11. <b>Heinz Bulmahn (associate)</b>   | <b>Dean, Graduate College</b>                         | <b>Project support and campus implementation</b>  |
| 12. <b>Mark Gromko (associate)</b>     | <b>Vice-Provost</b>                                   | <b>Project support and campus implementation</b>  |
| 13. <b>Bruce Petryshak (associate)</b> | <b>CIO</b>  | <b>Project support and campus implementation</b>  |

**Other comments about LC members and supporters:**

Our core members represent both staff and faculty from across disciplines at BGSU.

In addition to our core learning community members, we have enlisted associate support from key members of the following areas:

- Provost Office
- Graduate College
- Information Technology Services

**E. Background & Context:**

Briefly describe your Learning Community Project and the context within which you undertake it. *What do you hope to achieve? How will this contribute to learning at your institution? What desired ending(s) would you like for the story of your LC and its project? What types of institutional support do you have or would like?*

**Project Description**

Refer to item A for a project overview. The project will:

- o Explore a new approach to the development and delivery of online learning materials.
- o Be developed in a modular format.
- o Be designed with “re-usable” objects.
- o Focus on technological concepts rather than specific skills/tools.
- o Be a graduate technical competency pilot.
- o Be applicable across several programs/depts.

**Project Outcomes/Desired Project Ending**

- o Graduate students will develop a competency in technology and its application in teaching, learning, and scholarly projects.
- o OLN LC members will gain knowledge and experience in the development and delivery of online training materials.
- o Project may serve as model for future modular development of online materials at BGSU.

**Institutional Support**

This project has strong support from the Graduate College and the Office of the Provost.

**F. Description of your early work, planning and preparations.**

Describe the preliminary work of the learning community as you prepare for your community project and for attending your Learning Institute. *What were the key components in your planning and preparation for your LC (Roles? Methods? Timelines? Coordinating schedules?)? What were key issues and concerns, and, how did you sort them out? What were the key successes and what impact have they had? Are there any vignettes that illustrate these?*

Since the awarding of the grant, the Learning Community (LC) has met as a group to discuss project tasks, assignments, and resources. In addition “sub-teams” were formed and have met to work on the development of the project plan, as well as the module descriptions. Outcomes to date include:

1. The development of a centralized communication hub for the LC via the creation of a Blackboard organization. All documents and communications related to the LC project and grant proposal are stored here and can be modified and posted by LC members.
2. A project plan has been created, including a task breakdown and timeline.
3. Technical competencies have been determined for module development.
4. Module descriptions have been developed, which includes goals, topics, and outcomes for each module.
5. Individual team member roles and responsibilities have been more specifically defined.
6. Additional ideas have been “brainstormed” and documented. As the project plan is developed, team members have been adding and expanding to the project, with ideas for future implementation after the grant project completion.
7. A Graduate College representative was added to the LC. A developer for the modules was identified.
8. The LC met with the Dean of the Graduate College and the Provost’s Office to discuss the implementation of this project into the Graduate Program at BGSU. Both groups expressed strong support and interest in the project.

**G. Description and learning about your community building and project development.**

Describe early phases of building your community and developing the project. *What key challenges, problems, solutions, struggles, and failures do you have and how do you handle them? What did they – or will they - lead to? What successes have you enjoyed to date? Are there any vignettes of potential consequence or impacts that you can share? How are you utilizing the Learning Communities information provided by Milt Cox on October 15?*

| <b>Challenges</b>   | <b>Solutions</b>  |
|---|---|
| <p>The proposed Learning Community (LC) is composed of a highly diverse group of individuals including administrative staff, faculty, and library faculty, all with different job rankings and all of whom work different hours. Coordination of schedules for this diverse group has been challenging.</p>   | <p>The creation of a centralized hub for storing info (via use of a Blackboard organization) has been helpful. Communicating electronically via email has also been used to coordinate meetings. Assignments of work to smaller sub-groups has helped some.</p>   |
| <p>All of the Learning Community members have extremely busy jobs and schedules; finding time to do the actual project work has been very difficult.</p>  | <p>All of the above solutions apply here also; however, finding time for this project is probably the most difficult aspect for the folks on this team. This project work is additional work added to already busy schedules. Consolidation of tasks and using the technology infrastructure to communicate and share files and a regular meeting and project schedule has helped.</p>                  |
| <p>Few models of technology literacy programs exist for graduate students at other institutions; thus, this is a new concept that will need to be developed from scratch. An additional challenge will be to work with the Graduate College to fit these competencies into an already tight graduate student schedule.</p>  | <p>Competencies have been developed by the group and are being reviewed by the Graduate College. In addition, the pilot run of the program should yield feedback from graduate students. We are exploring with the GC ways to attract and compensate graduate students who partake in this program, including additional credit, the use of a laptop program, and the development of an eportfolio.</p> |
| <p>Program sustainability. One of the issues that the LC is discussing with the Graduate College is how to sustain this project after completion. State funding is being reduced, graduates are already overscheduled, and there is limited availability of staff to keep the program running. None of the team members have the time to take on this additional work after project completion.</p> | <p>Instructors and module developers will need to be identified, trained and compensated. We imagine that a specific area at the university will need to be funded in creative ways to maintain this program at the level we think it will grow. We have already identified some of these ways (laptop program, stipend, faculty incentives, etc.)</p>  |