

Distance Education

ACCESS & SUCCESS

The Quarterly Newsletter of the
Kenai Peninsula College Title III Grant

April 2009

KPC
TITLE III DISTANCE EDUCATION ACCESS & SUCCESS

Volume 1

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Issue 1

Meet Title III

By Paula Martin

KPC has been expanding distance offerings for years, based on faculty interest and student need. Our first faculty teaching distance tried out interactive video in order to reach students at both KPC campuses. Faculty then graduated to new, online technologies so they could reach more students across the Kenai Peninsula. And students living across the 25,000 square miles on the Kenai Peninsula, often far from a KPC campus, wanted to be able to work on their education. As KPC expanded classes offered via the web to serve those students, we recognized the unmet needs that were growing along with our web-based courses. One big concern was, *How do distant students receive student services?*

They cannot walk up to our Student Services desk and ask questions from Student Peers. A second concern was, *How do we make high-demand, workforce development programs, such as Process Technology, available to our rural students via distance?* KPC faculty and staff were successful in writing a grant to Title III, a federal program designed to help strengthen institutions of higher education. Our Title III grant funds pilot projects to help us fill those gaps.

Title III pilot projects will help us figure out what choices to make. Tools to communicate across the internet have expanded. Just a decade ago, email was the main choice. Today, the mix includes IM (instant messaging and chat functions), video (Skype, YouTube), social networking (Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter) and virtual worlds (Second Life). Title III activities over the next few years will be piloting some of these web-tools as potential tools for KPC Student Services. Web technology will help maintain the strong links between students and KPC advisors, whether they are down the road or off the road.



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Title III pilot projects will do more than just support Student Services. They will also help design courses and programs offered via distance, primarily focused on our high-demand Associate of Applied Science in Process Technology and associated GERs. Title III will organize workshops and meetings for more faculty to improve their teaching skills for distance

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Title III is about increasing distance access for all students, particularly remote ones, and increasing potential for success at the same time.

Year 1 Objectives & Measures (revised)

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2009

Activity Objective, <i>Measurable Results</i> , Problems Addressed, Related Goals	Performance Measures (all results measurable)
Year One	
<p>1. By September 09, 75% of pilot students (Math Initiative, online and on-site math lab, refresher math sessions), who originally placed below Math 055, will be appropriately enrolled in Math 055, compared to 66% of developmental math students who were subsequently eligible to enroll in Math 055 in Spring 2008.</p> <p>Problem addressed: Too few students have access to needed support services.</p> <p>Related goal: Provide a supportive and stimulating learning environment</p>	<p>1a. By 9/09, min 15 adult education students and 15 high school seniors who score below MATH 055 on ACCUPLACER will complete one or more portions of the Math Initiative.</p> <p>1b. By 9/09, 75% of students will persist in Math 055 after 4 weeks, compared to 62% who persisted in Math 055 after 4 weeks in Fall 2008.</p> <p>1c. By 9/09, min 15 students who score below MATH 055 on ACCUPLACER will pilot an online or on-site math at least 3 times to improve math readiness.</p>
<p>2. By September 09, 70% of pilot students enrolled in distance-delivered PHYS 115 will complete with a C or better.</p> <p>Problem addressed: Enrollment is declining. Too few students have access to needed support services.</p> <p>Related goal: Improve distance delivery and other technologies to ensure maximum access and flexibility in course and program delivery. Provide a supportive and stimulating learning environment.</p>	<p>2a. By 9/09, 70% of students enrolled maximum 20 students will enroll in Phys 115.</p> <p>2b. By 9/09, min 15 students will pilot Orientation to Technology in Distance Education with an 80% satisfaction rating.</p> <p>2c. By 9/09, faculty/staff rate training for new technologies 80% satisfaction or higher.</p> <p>2d. By 9/09, new DE course evaluation process is ready to pilot with PHYS 115.</p> <p>2e. By 9/09, PRT 140 and ET101 are 50% developed for pilot delivery in Spring 2010.</p>

Martin, continued from p. 1

offerings. In the past, KPC faculty either had to learn it on their own or be lucky to get a spot in the occasional distance workshops. Title III will act as a resource for distance instructional design. Teaching in this new world of higher education requires more than just talking to students to lead them through new ideas and concepts. Teaching via distance requires a thoughtful organization of online course content along with a mechanism to create a meaningful student—faculty dialogue. The instructional design activities in Title III will help faculty design good quality distance courses and help provide a high-demand program online, expanding program access to rural Alaskans.

Higher education is changing as technology opens more opportunities. It is hard to predict the future but with a student body that has grown up with web-connected computers and is used to finding information themselves (*I'll just google it*), we expect those 'digital natives' will be demanding more flexible, online course offerings. For students who are juggling family and work demands, on-line offerings may be the only access they have to higher education. We are working to provide both distance and face-to-face courses and student services that have made KPC an excellent place for higher education. We can see a future where Alaskans look to distance offerings to supply part or all of their educational needs. We want KPC to be ready to continue to serve the educational needs of our students, wherever the student happens to live. Title III will help us prepare for that future.

The People Who Make Things Happen

Liz Downing: Liz is the Title III Project Director responsible for assuring everything is in place to meet grant objectives. This includes informing and receiving input on ideas to strengthen KPC, budgeting, staffing, tracking for grant compliance, and reports. Liz was the KBC Student Services Manager for 20 years until 2006. She led the initial Title III application process and is committed to reaching grant goals. Liz serves on the KPBSD Board of Education (4 years), on the KPC College Council, and the Kenai Peninsula Project Grad Board. Liz lives in Homer with her husband, tall 12-year-old son, yellow lab, parakeets, and hundreds of tropical fish.



Karen Hakala: Karen has been working as KPC's grants manager and payroll tech since June '05. Taking on Title III's Project Assistant position was a natural extension of her grants role. Karen is a native Alaskan, born and raised in Fairbanks. She lived in Northern California with her

family for 15 years. She has worked with the nonprofit Women's Economic Growth; helped start up and manage The River Exchange, a watershed education organization; and collaborating with a Dunsmuir community group, founded The Kids' Factory, a family resource center. She returned in 2000 with her daughters to the Kenai Peninsula, and worked for a criminal defense attorney until she was hired by KPC. "A very happy day!" she says.

Dr. Heather M. Nash: Heather is our Activities Director and eLearning Developer. Heather's background is varied; as an undergrad she studied History and Computer Science with a healthy dollop of Mathematics. She worked for several years as a software applications trainer, tinkered around with PC technology, and eventually returned to grad school where she studied Adult Education. Most recently she spent several years on the faculty of UAA's College of Education, teaching graduate courses in the areas of Adult Education and research methods. Heather has two children, a dog, and a slew of cats, plants, and fish to occupy her attention outside the office.



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Investing in Technology

Dan Castimore and Heather Nash

As we have gotten Year 1 of the grant rolling, one of our tasks has been the selection and purchase of equipment. Beyond the pencil sharpeners and battery backups, we made a few purchases of interest to our constituency.

One is the purchase of a VMware server (VM stands for "virtual machine") and associated Storage Area Network, or SAN. An additional VMware server has been purchased for the Kachemak Bay Campus. Dan Castimore noted that the VMware servers will enable us to create multiple virtual server installations on a single physical server. Having only one physical server rather than many allows us to save on resources, reduce power consumption, and reduce server maintenance that must be performed.

A VMware server will also increase flexibility. Before now, when IT needed to test out a new server product we would have to purchase a new server to do the testing. With a VMware server we can simply create a new virtual server in a matter of hours that will serve identically. These servers will support Title III projects and have expanded the capacities of IT services. A good example of both is support for the Process Technology degree program, by allowing students from off campus to access simulation software, Simtronics DSS 100.

Eventually our activities will include other expanded capacities such as streaming video.

Another item of interest is a video editing station (on order) – this machine and associated peripherals will be available in the Title III office for faculty to use to create video and audio clips, get one-on-one help from Title III staff, or create other materials that may be beyond what is possible at one's own desk.

A final item of note is that KBC is in the process of getting fitted out with six new machines, printer, and peripherals in its Access Lab. It will be used in pilot projects and is also accessible for use by all students.



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Brief Notes on Evaluation

Heather M. Nash

It might surprise you to see an entire column in the newsletter devoted to evaluation, given that we have only just begun. It is an essential component of the grant, however, and needs to be incorporated from the beginning. An evaluation plan was written into the original grant narrative (available on our website at <http://www.kpc.alaska.edu/about/titleiii.html>); we have an external (not associated with the grant) evaluator, Connie Dooley; in addition, we have a Monitoring and Evaluation Team, or MET.

It is the MET that is of interest today. One of the purposes of the MET, besides evaluating our progress, is to orient the institution to the Title III project and ensure full dissemination of Title III-related information to the campuses. Thus, members of the MET come from various departments and campuses:

Paula Martin (KRC, Chair)

Bill Howell (KRC, Stdt Svcs)

Scott Kraxberger (KRC, B&I)

Ruth Greiss (KRC, Stdt Rep)

Diane Taylor (KRC, LC)

Jane Pitcock (KRC, faculty)

Carol Swartz (KBC)

Another good reason to be familiar with the MET is that the MET is an excellent vehicle by which people at KPC can make suggestions and provide input for the grant.

A final purpose of the MET is an important one to note here. Title III grants are about transformation of an institution – that is, they are about change. Change is often difficult and seldom comfortable, and thus the MET is there to help facilitate transitions where necessary.

The next meeting of the MET is in early April – please see the Upcoming Events column for details. Title III would like to thank those folks who have been willing to contribute their time and energy to the MET and success of KPC's Title III Grant.

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Using Blackboard

Save time and
promote learning!

S A V V Y

Susan Mircovich

Whether your class is online or in the classroom, your students will benefit from practice activities that you include in their course shell. Perhaps you assign homework problems that students turn in for grading. Maybe you give pop quizzes before your lecture. Both of these activities can be recreated in Blackboard and graded automatically, with your feedback provided for incorrect answers. Yes, you will have to type it in, but you will only have to do it once! Some ideas for using the “Test” feature of Blackboard:

- Have students put their homework answers into a quiz for automatic grading. This allows students to rework missed problems using your feedback /problem solutions immediately, instead of waiting for graded papers to be returned. You can even include images in the feedback for complex problem solutions or answers.
- Set up weekly self-grading “quizzes” to help students (and faculty) track progress. Students can immediately correct misconceptions as they check their quiz to see what they missed. You can include the assigned reading or additional problems in your feedback to guide students in revisiting the material. These quizzes could be either self-check activities with no points, or graded quizzes.
- Analyze quiz statistics to see which concepts students are not “getting”. To see how your students did on each individual question click on Gradebook > name of the quiz or test > “assessment attempt details”. You can tell at a glance if there are any questions/concepts that students did not understand – for example if 0 students answered a particular problem incorrectly, you might assume that your students need more practice with that concept!

If you plan to add weekly quizzes or frequent exams to your Bb course shell, be sure to check with your textbook publisher to see if they have a testbank of questions that will import directly into your course. This makes it very easy to create weekly practice activities for students without having to write every question. Be creative with Bb quizzes – once you get started you will think of many ways to build a rich learning environment for your students.

Title III Current Events

Karen Hakala

Recent Happenings

Second Life Webinar

January 21 & 23 at KRC & KBC

This was a two-part webcast to learn virtual world Second Life basics and how to incorporate Second Life in an educational setting. Participants gained a broad understanding of the educational potential of Second Life and were offered a streamlined approach for gaining sufficient mastery of virtual worlds to designing effective learning experiences. Resources from the webinar may be found on the KPC Distance Education Bb shell, or contact us for access to webinar resources.



Hybrid Learning Webinar – Instructional and Institutional Implementation

February 27 at KRC & KBC

Participants learned to: 1) articulate the benefits of a hybrid learning instructional delivery model, including its potential to address Net Generation student learning and institutional needs; 2) identify the various components of a successful faculty development (re)design program; and 3) identify best practices and considerations for developing a sound institutional hybrid learning implementation plan.

Management Evaluation Team (MET) Meetings

February 25 and March 24 at KRC

Title III Management Evaluation Team members represent the different departments at KRC: Paula Martin, Chair, Bill Howell, Diane Taylor, Jane Pitcock, Carol Swartz, Scott Kraxberger, and student rep. Ruth Griess. MET members were provided an overview of the grant and MET's purpose: to ensure full dissemination of information to the campus community; seamless institutionalization of new practices and procedures; rigorous evaluation of project progress, and attention to the goals of the GPRA, as well as Title III goals and objectives.

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Upcoming Events

Supporting Online Learners

March 30 thru April 17 – online course

This is a three-week online course designed for direct service student support personnel. In this course students will explore resources from the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (WCET), discuss resources their institutions currently deliver at a distance and identify priorities for additional services that might be made available to online students.

Management Evaluation Team Meeting

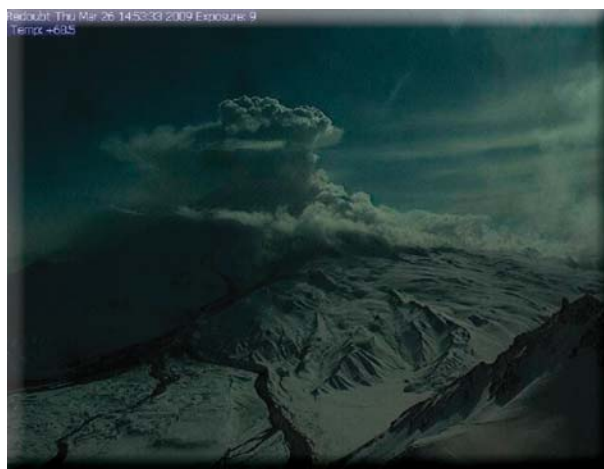
April 8 12:30 – 2 pm Rm 203 KRC

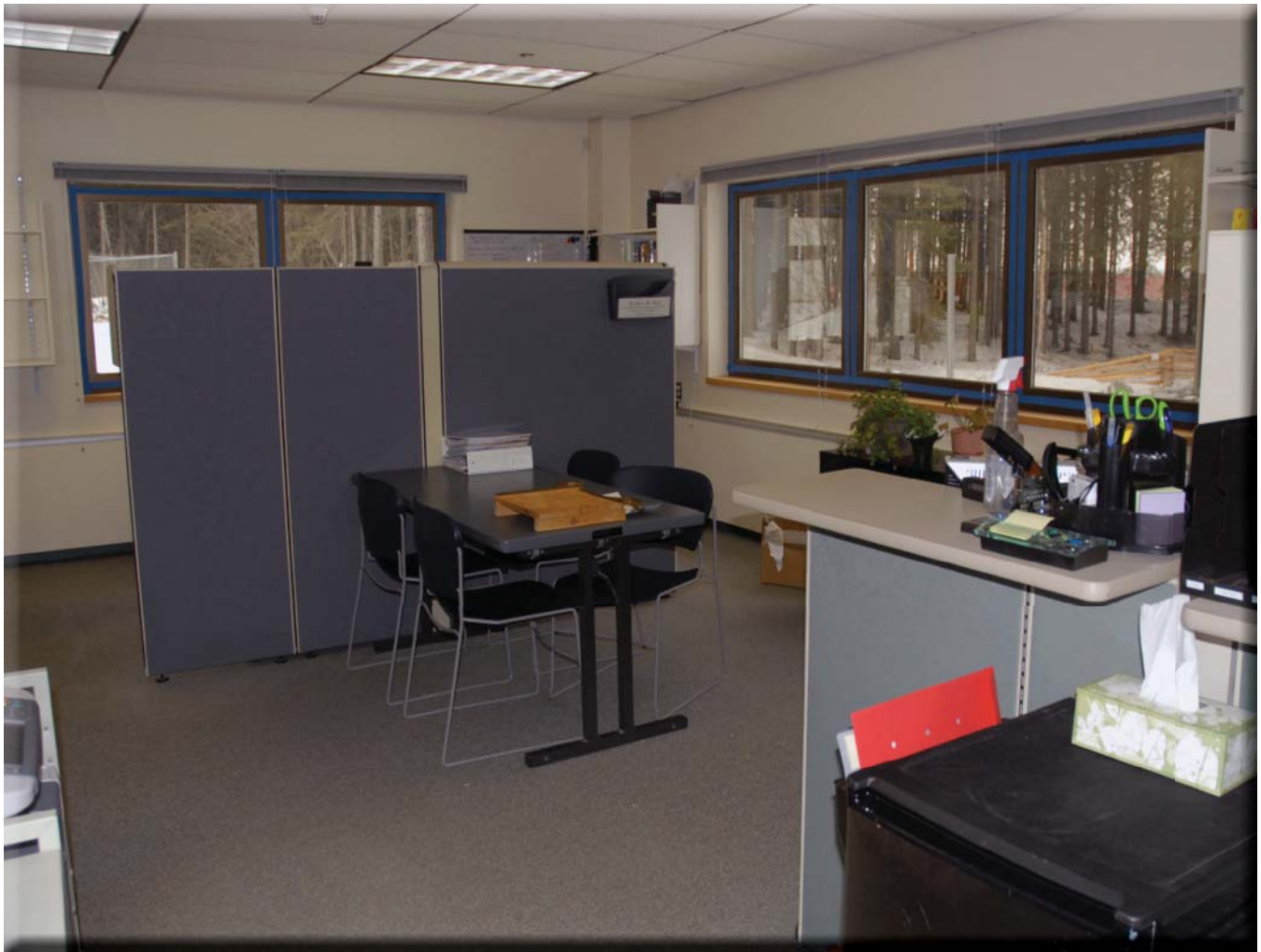
KPC Distance Education Workshop 2009

May 11-15 at the Kenai River Campus

Sponsored by Alaska Educational Innovations Network (AEIN) and KPC's Title III Grant for Distance Education Access. A recent survey was completed to determine the topics for this year's workshop. Participants will improve their distance education course development skills and will develop a DE course using various modalities. Space for the 2009 workshop is limited to 16 people from the KBC and KRC campuses. The application date is extended to April 10, 2009. Contact Heather Nash at inhmn@uaa.alaska.edu for an application.

Other Current Events...





Title III Office in 118b Ward building

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