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REPORT ON EFFECTIVENESS OF DISTANCE LEARNING

"What's the difference between distance learning and traditional classroom-based instruction?" A report from THE INSTITUTE for Higher Education Policy, "What's the Difference? A Review of Contemporary Research on the Effectiveness of Distance Learning in Higher Education," finds that the "overall quality of the research [in the last decade] is questionable and thereby renders many of the findings inconclusive. Numerous gaps in the research require more investigation and information." The report is available online at <http://www.ihep.com/difference.pdf>

THE INSTITUTE for Higher Education Policy is a non-profit, non-partisan organization whose mission is to foster access to and quality in postsecondary education. For more information, contact: THE INSTITUTE for Higher Education Policy, 1320 19th Street NW Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036 USA; tel: 202-861-8223; fax: 202-861-9307; email: institute@ihep.com; Web: <http://www.ihep.com/>

NEW ONLINE SOURCES FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Looking for education statistics? The International Archive of Education Data (IAED), sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and hosted by the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan, is a new archive that collects and disseminates data "pertaining to all levels of education in countries for which data can be made available." The archive began with seventy-two collections totaling more than 1,250 files from the NCES, including Elementary/Secondary Surveys, Postsecondary Surveys, Longitudinal Surveys, and Library and Education Assessment surveys. IAED is available at <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/IAED/>

NCES also has three new publications for researchers, policy analysts, or any user involved in the study of U.S. education statistics:

Education Statistics Quarterly

Each issue includes short publications, summaries, and descriptions that cover all NCES publications and data products released during a three-month period.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs99/quarterlyapr/index.html> [HTML format]

or

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs99/1999626.pdf> [PDF format, requires Adobe Acrobat]

Reader]

"Learning About Education Through Statistics"

A brochure that provides general information about NCES surveys and how to access data from NCES.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs99/1999028.pdf> [PDF format, requires Adobe Acrobat

Reader]

Directory of NAEP Publications

The most comprehensive listing of government-funded NAEP publications dating as far back as the project's inception in 1969.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs99/1999489.pdf> [PDF format, requires Adobe Acrobat

Reader]

NCES is part of the U.S. Department of Education and is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data that are related to education in the United States and other nations. For more information about NCES and its other services and products, contact: National Center for Education Statistics, 555 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20208-5574, USA; tel: 202-219-1828; Web:

<http://nces.ed.gov/>

INTERACTIVITY AND INTERNET LEARNING

In "Designing Interactivities for Internet Learning" [*Syllabus*, vol. 12, no. 7, March 1999] David Mesher, professor of English at San Jose State University, asserts that interactivity is the key to successful online learning. Based on his experience with "Mission: Critical," a Web-based course in critical thinking, Mesher provides a schema for incorporating interactivity that moves courseware beyond the mere porting of existing materials into an online environment. The article is available at http://www.syllabus.com/mar99_magfea.html

David Mesher's "Mission: Critical" was a semi-finalist for the 1998 GII (Global Information Infrastructure) Award in Education. The course is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/itl/>

The GII Awards define, recognize, and promote best practices and new models in the application of Internet and network technology. For more information about the GII Awards, see <http://www.gii.com/>

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Annual subscriptions are free to individuals who work in colleges, universities, and high schools in the U.S.; \$24 (non-educators/U.S.); \$24 (Canada and Mexico); \$75 (other countries).

An online form for free subscriptions is available at

<http://www.syllabus.com/syllsub.html>

HISTORY JOURNAL INCORPORATES MULTIMEDIA MATERIALS

The Journal for Multimedia History (JMMH), sponsored by the University at Albany State University of New York History Department, is a new, peer-reviewed electronic journal that "presents, evaluates, and disseminates multimedia historical

scholarship." The "Teaching and Research" section in the first issue (Fall 1998) includes "Teaching Islamic Civilization with Information Technology," by Corinne Blake, Department of History, Rowan University and "Student-Constructed Web Sites for Research Projects: Is It Worth It?" by Adrienne Hood, Department of History, and Jacqueline Spafford, History of Art Department, University of Toronto. Blake's article contains numerous links to primary materials on the Web. Hood and Spafford describe how Web resources were incorporated into a graduate-level history course "in order to stretch the participants' capacities to work with the visual and the abstract" materials.

The journal is available for free at <http://www.albany.edu/jmmh/>

For more information, contact: *The Journal for Multimedia History*, Department of History, University at Albany, State University of New York 1400 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12222 USA; tel: 518-442-4800; fax: 518-442-3477; email: jmmh@csc.albany.edu; Web: <http://www.albany.edu/jmmh/>

DISTANCE EDUCATION HAVES AND HAVE-NOTS

The Virtual University & Educational Opportunity Issues of Equity and Access for the Next Generation, a report prepared by the College Board," reviews recent developments in information technology and distance learning, and how they combine with economic forces to fuel a global market for higher education." The report concludes that, rather than increasing access to underserved groups, technologies such as the "virtual university" may create more education haves and have-nots.

A complete copy of the report (in PDF file format) is available on the College Board Website at <http://www.collegeboard.org/policy/html/virtual.html>

The College Board is an association of schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations that provide programs and services in the areas of teaching and learning, assessment, guidance, placement, financial aid, admissions, and enrollment. For more information, contact: The College Board, 45 Columbus Avenue, New York, NY 10023-6992 USA; tel: 212-713-8000; Web: <http://www.collegeboard.org/>

THE PICTURE COLLECTION

The Picture Collection contains hundreds of thousands of photographs from Time, Inc.'s collection of photos from its publications (*Time*, *Life*, *People*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Fortune*, and Time-Life Books), along with more than a million historical images from the London Mansell Collection. Membership registration is required to search and view the collection; however, the membership is free. As a member, users can license the use of the images in their projects. Even if you do not plan to license and use the images, you can still browse the collection at no charge at <http://www.thepicturecollection.com/>

RECOMMENDED READING

This month, the UNC-Chapel Hill Scholarly Communication Working Group invited David Green, founding executive director of the National Initiative for a Networked Cultural Heritage (NINCH), to speak on "Networking Cultural Heritage: Promises

and Challenges of the Digital Environment." NINCH is a diverse coalition of sixty-nine educational institutions and cultural organizations dedicated to ensuring the greatest participation of all parts of the cultural community in the digital environment. Green cited several interesting articles and books during his talk. An annotated listing of these resources, along with Web links, is available on the Web at <http://ils.unc.edu/schol-com/dgbib.html>

More information about NINCH is available at <http://www.ninch.org/>

More information about the UNC-Chapel Hill Scholarly Communication Working Group is available at <http://ils.unc.edu/schol-com/>

EDITOR'S NOTE

Issues of many journals, magazines, and newsletters are available, in whole or in part, on the World Wide Web. The CIT's compilation of online publications has been recently updated and expanded. See the list at <http://www.unc.edu/cit/resources/journals.html>

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