CIT Infobits

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About INFOBITS

Infobits is an electronic service of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ITS Teaching and Learning's Center for Instructional Technology. Each month the CIT's Information Resources Consultant monitors and selects from a number of information and instructional technology sources that come to her attention and provides brief notes for electronic dissemination to educators.

Report on Supply of IT Workers in the U.S.
Study on Distance Learning Programs in Higher Education
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Designing Web Pages for Sight Impaired Users
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REPORT ON SUPPLY OF IT WORKERS IN THE U.S.

The Computing Research Association (CRA) has released a new report on the supply of and demand for information technology (IT) workers in the United States. "The Supply of Information Technology Workers in the United States," by Peter Freeman (Dean of the Georgia Institute of Technology College of Computing) and William Aspray (CRA Executive Director), provides a series of recommendations targeted to five groups: government, higher education, industry, professional societies, and individuals. The report contains several topics of special interest to colleges and universities: industry-academic cooperation, certification of educational and training programs, improvement of the research and teaching environment to retain and recruit faculty, and curriculum development.

CRA collaborated with five other major computing professional societies to prepare the report: American Association for Artificial Intelligence (AAAI), Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), IEEE Computer Society, Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM), and USENIX Association. Twenty-three university and industry experts also contributed to the report.

Single printed copies of the report are available free from the Computing Research Association, 1100 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-4632 USA; tel: 202-234-2111; fax: 202-667-1066; email: info@cra.org The complete report is also available online (in PDF format) at http://www.cra.org/wits/cra.wits.html
Four chapters in HTML format are also available at this address; an HTML version of the entire report will eventually be on the site.

The CRA is an association of more than 180 North American computer science departments, computer engineering laboratories, and affiliated professional societies. For more information about CRA, see their Website at http://www.cra.org/

STUDY ON DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

According to a recent study published by Primary Research Group, Inc., an estimated 93 percent of distance learning (DL) programs in North American colleges and universities use email as their DL medium. The study, "The Survey of Distance Learning Programs in Higher Education," is based on a random sample of sixty-one college and university distance learning programs throughout the United States and Canada. The report provides a comparison of data reported in 1997 and 1998. Findings show that 36.68 percent of DL instructors in 1998 were adjunct faculty, compared with 1997 in which 27.34 percent of the instructors were adjunct faculty. Instructor/tutor salaries account for the highest percentage of the DL programs' total costs and expenditures -- 31.72 percent. In 1997, instructor/tutor salaries accounted for 37.21 percent of the total costs and expenditures.

Other findings of the study include:

- 86.96 percent of the programs operate at a profit, while 13.04 percent operate at a profit of greater than 50 percent.

- Thirteen percent of the programs in public colleges and twenty-seven percent of the programs in private colleges have created new courses for DL, rather than reusing and retooling traditional courses for the DL programs.

The table of contents for "The Survey of Distance Learning Programs in Higher Education, 1999 Edition" is available online at http://www.primaryresearch.com/distanc2.htm
The full report costs $87.50, or $139.75 for both 1998 and 1999 Editions. Contact Gary Boas at 212-764-1579 to place an order.
For more information on this and their other studies, contact Primary Research Group, Inc., 68 West 38 Street, Suite 202, New York, NY 10018 USA; tel: 212-764-1579: fax: 212-302-6530; email: primarydat@aol.com; Web: http://www.primaryresearch.com/

ONLINE COURSE ON ONLINE COURSES

World Campus 101 is an orientation for students taking online courses at Pennsylvania State University. It acquaints students with the skills they need to be a successful participant in a virtual classroom. Although the materials are focused on Penn State's specific computer systems, some of the topics are applicable for use at any campus: the differences between online courses and on-campus classes, "Netiquette" for online communication, and the use of Web-based resources. World Campus 101 is available at http://www.worldcampus.psu.edu:8900/public/wc101/

DESIGNING WEB PAGES FOR SIGHT IMPAIRED USERS

If you are involved in making Web pages accessible for users with sight impairments, check out "Disabled Accessibility: The Pragmatic Approach," by Jakob Nielsen ("The Alertbox," June 13, 1999 issue). Nielsen includes a link to the W3 Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0, the W3's prioritized list of design rules, and a very useful checklist for Web page designers. The article is available at http://www.useit.com/alertbox/990613.html

"The Alertbox: Current Issues in Web Usability" is a biweekly column by Dr. Jakob Nielsen, of the Nielsen Norman Group. Back issues are available on the Web at http://www.useit.com/alertbox/

CURRENTS IN ELECTRONIC LITERACY

The Computer Writing and Research Lab (CWRL) of the Division of Rhetoric and Composition at the University of Texas at Austin is publishing a new, free electronic journal, *Currents in Electronic Literacy. Currents* is a "scholarly discussion of issues pertaining to electronic literacy . . .addressing the use of electronic texts and technologies in reading, writing, teaching, and learning in . . . literature, rhetoric and composition, languages, communications, media studies, and education." The focus of the first issue (Spring 1999) is "Electronic Pedagogy in Literature Classes." You can read Currents at http://www.cwrl.utexas.edu/currents/

Currents [ISSN 1524-6493] is published two times a year, in the spring and fall. For more information, contact John Slatin, General Editor, or David Barndollar, Coordinating Editor, c/o Computer Writing and Research Lab, Parlin 3, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712 USA; email: ejournal@lists.cwrl.utexas.edu

CWRL also provides links to the online edition of *Computers and Composition: An International Journal for Teachers of Writing* (published by Ablex Publishing Corporation). For more information about CWRL, see their Website at http://www.cwrl.utexas.edu/

JOURNAL ON MARKUP LANGUAGES

Markup Languages: Theory and Practice is a new peer-reviewed technical journal "devoted to research, development, and practical applications of text markup for computer processing, management, manipulation, and display." The journal is published by MIT Press. Some sample articles are available at http://mitpress.mit.edu/journal-home.tcl?issn=10996621

Markup Languages: Theory and Practice [ISSN 1099-6621] is published quarterly. Annual subscriptions are available for $50 (individual) and $145 (institutional). To subscribe, contact: Circulation Department, MIT Press Journals, Five Cambridge Center, Cambridge, MA 02142-1407 USA; tel: 617-253-2889; fax: 617-577-1545; email: journals-orders@mit.edu; Web: http://mitpress.mit.edu/journal-ordering-options.tcl?issn=10996621

ONLINE EDUCATION NEWS SCANNING SERVICE

eduprise.com, in partnership with NewsScan, is publishing "Need to Know," a biweekly report on technology, education, and training in today's learning organizations. Articles in recent issues include: "The Limitations of Online Education," "Electronic Ed Paves Way for New Collaborations," and "Who Owns an Online Course?"

"Need-To-Know" is available free by email. To subscribe to "Need-To-Know," send a blank message to: join-need-to-know@news.eduprise.com

eduprise.com provides services to colleges and universities to "enable rapid transition to Internet-empowered education, training, and management of knowledge resources." For more information about the company, see their Website at http://www.eduprise.com/

EDITOR'S NOTE: NEW CIT NEWSLETTER

The UNC-Chapel Hill Center for Instructional Technology announces a new publication. , published twice a month, is an electronic newsletter featuring technology-related news of interest to UNC-Chapel Hill faculty members, graduate instructors and the staff who support them. Each

issue of will include announcements of CIT activities and services, other campus instructional and research technology information, and news about off-campus workshops, conferences, and speakers.

To see the back issues, link to http://its.unc.edu/tl/citations/

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Please note that although the content of is of primary interest to the UNC-Chapel Hill community, subscriptions are open to anyone.