

**Issue 21**

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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.

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## DISTANCE COURSES: DIVERGENT VIEWS

Several articles in recent issues of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (CHE) provided divergent viewpoints on the effectiveness and advisability of online distance courses:

"After Half a Course, A Professor Concedes Distance Education Is Not for Him" by Sarah Carr, *CHE*, March 28, 2000

<http://chronicle.com/free/2000/03/2000032801u.htm>

"When several students approached John M. Zikopoulos and asked whether they could take his introductory-level chemistry course online, Mr. Zikopoulos figured he would give it a shot. He could not have anticipated the fiasco that would result.... In Mr. Zikopoulos's view, the experiment failed partly because of his own teaching style and lack of familiarity with the software he needed to use, and partly because of what he perceives as immutable aspects of distance education. 'Part of the problem was me,' he says. 'I didn't give them enough tools, and the tools that I did have I wasn't good at using.'"

"Teaching Distance Courses Is Rewarding, Survey of Instructors Finds" by Sarah Carr, *CHE*, March 15, 2000

<http://chronicle.com/free/2000/03/2000031501u.htm>

"Kay Rockwell and Susan M. Fritz -- both professors in the agricultural leadership, education, and communication department at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln -- asked 139 faculty members in the University of Nebraska system to rank a variety of items as incentives for teaching distance-education courses, obstacles [for teaching distance education courses], or neither." The researchers report their findings in "Incentives and Obstacles Influencing Higher Education Faculty and Administrators to Teach Via Distance" (available on the Web at <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/rockwell24.html>).

"Science Instructors Debate the Efficacy of Conducting Lab Courses Online" by Sarah Carr, *CHE*, March 10, 2000

<http://chronicle.com/free/2000/03/2000031001u.htm>

"While some instructors have embraced the notion and practice of teaching labs online, others worry about the implications for the teaching of hands-on science. They say it's difficult to teach advanced-level science courses online."

"Psych Students Learn More Through Distance Ed But Are Less Satisfied" by Sarah Carr, *CHE*, February 14, 2000, p. A48

<http://chronicle.com/free/2000/02/2000021401u.htm>

"Undergraduates enrolled in introductory psychology perform better in distance-education courses, but are generally less happy with them, according to a study by Ruth S. and William S. Maki, two psychology professors at Texas Tech University." Their complete report on the study will appear this spring in the journal *Behavior Research Methods, Instruments, and Computers*.

"Logging in with ... Rob Kling: Indiana U. Scholar Says Distance Education Requires New Approach to Teaching" by Dan Carnevale, *CHE*, February 21, 2000, p. A44

<http://chronicle.com/free/2000/02/2000022101u.htm>

"Rob Kling is a professor of information systems and information science at Indiana University at Bloomington's School of Library and Information Science. Since the 1970's, he has studied the social aspect of computerization.... [He] has been vocal in warning that distance education should be used with care, because it is still in an experimental phase."

"David Noble's Battle to Defend the 'Sacred Space' of the Classroom" by Jeffrey R. Young, *CHE*, March 31, 2000, p. A47

<http://chronicle.com/free/v46/i30/30a00101.htm>

"David F. Noble says distance education is fool's gold, and he's eager to point out who the fools are. In speeches, essays, and countless sound bites, the professor argues that the primary motive behind the craze for online education is profit rather than pedagogy, and that the glimmer of dot-com riches is tempting some administrators to put the core values of their institutions at risk."

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## THE STATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION IN THE U.S.

"Distance Education at Postsecondary Education Institutions: 1997-98," a recently-release report from the U.S. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), "provides estimates of the number of institutions offering distance education courses, the number of distance education course offerings and enrollments (by field of study and instructional level), and the number of degree and certification programs offered. It also looks at the types of technologies used to deliver education over a distance and at how tuition and fees for distance education compare with those for on-campus courses." 5,010 public and private postsecondary institutions were surveyed. Trend information is provided with the inclusion of data covering 1994-95 that was collected for an earlier report.

The complete report is available in PDF format on the Web at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2000013>

NCES is part of the U.S. Department of Education. It 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 and links to other NCES reports, link to <http://nces.ed.gov/>

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## **DISTANCE LEARNING ADMINISTRATION PUBLICATION**

The *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration* is a peer-reviewed electronic journal published free of charge on the Web at <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/jmain11.html>

Articles in recent issues included:

"Why Do Educators Embrace High-Cost Technologies?" by Anna C. McFadden, George E. Marsh II, and Barrie Jo Price, University of Alabama

"Incentives and Obstacles Influencing Higher Education Faculty and Administrators to Teach Via Distance" by S. Kay Rockwell, Susan M. Fritz, et al., University of Nebraska

"Out of the Ivory Tower and Into the Chat Rooms -- Are We Giving in Too Much to Technology?" by Nancy Griffin Mims, State University of West Georgia

"Cognitive Styles and Distance Education" by Yuliang Liu and Dean Ginther, Texas A & M University-Commerce

*The Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration* is published quarterly by the Center for Distance Education, The State University of West Georgia, 1600 Maple Street, Carrollton, GA 30118 USA; Web: <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/>

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## **GUIDEBOOK FOR MANAGING TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Anthony W. Bates, Director of Distance Education and Technology, Continuing Studies, University of British Columbia, has written a guide for helping faculty adapt to teaching with technology. *Managing Technological Change: Strategies for College and University Leaders* covers winning faculty support, estimating costs, funding new systems, and identifying risks of technologically-based teaching. Bates makes use of recent research and best-practice case studies, along with his own thirty years' experience in the field of teaching with technology.

More information, the table of contents, and a sample chapter (Chapter 10: "Avoiding the Faustian Contract and Meeting the Technology Challenge") are available on the Jossey-Bass Publishers Website at <http://www.JosseyBass.com/catalog/isbn/0-7879-4681-8/>

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## **COPYRIGHT TOWN HALL MEETINGS**

This year the National Initiative for a Networked Cultural Heritage (NINCH) is sponsoring "Copyright & Fair Use Town Meetings 2000," a series of six national sessions on intellectual property issues. Here are links to the meeting reports, papers, and other resources that are or will be available on the Web:

"The Public Domain"

Chicago, January 11, 2000

<http://www.ninch.org/copyright/townmeetings/chicago.html>

"Access: The DMCA [Digital Millennium Copyright Act] and Digital Copyright Issues"

Syracuse, February 4, 2000

<http://www.ninch.org/copyright/townmeetings/syracuse.html>

"Tug of War between Faculty, University, and Publisher"

New York City, February 26, 2000

<http://www.ninch.org/copyright/townmeetings/nyc.html>

"Distance Education"

Chapel Hill, March 7, 2000

<http://www.ninch.org/copyright/townmeetings/triangle.html>

"The Public Domain: Implied, Inferred and In Fact"

San Francisco, April 5

<http://www.ninch.org/copyright/townmeetings/sf.html>

"Copyright Confusion? Community Guides"

Baltimore, May 18

<http://www.ninch.org/copyright/townmeetings/aam.html>

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

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## ARTICLES ON INFORMATION ACCESS AROUND THE GLOBE

In the editorial in the latest issue of *TechKnowLogia: International Journal of Technologies for the Advancement of Knowledge* (vol. 2, issue 2, March/April 2000), Wadi Haddad writes that there "is now a genuine concern about the 'digital divide.' But narrowing the divide - publishing a newspaper in every village, placing a radio and TV in every household, putting a computer in every classroom, and wiring every building to the Internet - does not automatically solve the problem. The most serious divide is in the extent and quality of human knowledge and learning." Access to information and communication technologies is the theme of this issue of the journal. Some of the articles with an educational focus include:

"School Connectivity: Wishful Thinking or Wise Action?" by Sam Carlson and Robert Hawkins, World Links for Development Program

Describes a pilot project in Uganda which links secondary-level students and teachers around the world via the Internet, in order to improve educational opportunities, develop youth employment skills for the 21st Century, and build global awareness and understanding.

"Grassroots Libraries: A Base for Lifelong Learning" by Aya Aoki, Adult Outreach Education Thematic Group, The World Bank

Provides examples of how grassroots public library systems can serve as a powerful means to promote literacy and a lifelong learning environment for both children and adults.

"The Full Story: Full-Text Publications on the Web" by Gregg B. Jackson, Associate Professor and Coordinator, Education Policy Program, George Washington University

Provides pointers to full-text sources of books, reports, journals, and newsletters.

The entire issue is available on the Web at <http://www.TechKnowLogia.org/>

*TechKnowLogia* is published bimonthly by Knowledge Enterprise, Inc., PO Box 3027, Oakton, Virginia 22124 USA; fax: 703-242-2279; email: [techknowlogia@knowledgeenterprise.org](mailto:techknowlogia@knowledgeenterprise.org); Web: <http://www.techknowlogia.org/>

Publication is in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Subscriptions are free, but readers must first register to gain access to articles. Readers will then be notified by email when new issues are published.

Note: the thematic focus of the May/June 2000 issue will be: "Technologies For Basic Education for All."

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## **WILL THE INTERNET ALWAYS SPEAK ENGLISH?**

In "Will the Internet Always Speak English" [*The American Prospect*, vol. 11, no. 10, March 27-April 10, 2000], linguistics professor Geoffrey Nunberg writes about the "the ultimate act of intellectual colonialism" (i.e., the dominance of the English language on the Internet). "On the face of things, the concern is understandable. It isn't just that English is statistically predominant on the Web. There is also the heightened impression of English dominance that's created by the ubiquitous accessibility of Web documents. . . . Then too, it isn't just Anglophones who are using English on the Web. A lot of the English-language Web sites are based in non-English-speaking countries."

Despite the current prevalence of English on the Web, Nunberg points out that, unlike print or other media, the Web allows adding and disseminating multilingual content without substantially increasing costs. Ultimately, the Internet has the potential to strengthen the role of national and regional languages and to include communities that are "poorly served by traditional media, whether for geographic or political reasons." The complete article is on the Web at <http://www.prospect.org/archives/V11-10/nunberg-g.html>

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## **RECOMMENDED READING**

"Recommended Reading" lists items that have been recommended to me or that Infobits readers have found particularly interesting and/or useful. Send your recommendations to [kotlas@email.unc.edu](mailto:kotlas@email.unc.edu) for possible inclusion in this column.

"TECHNOS Interview II: On Today: Jane M. Healy, Educational Psychologist," by Carole Novak (*TECHNOS*, vol. 8, no. 4, Winter 1999, pp. 13-19).

<http://www.technos.net/journal/volume8/4healy.htm>

Healy is author of *Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect our Children's Minds* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998. ISBN: 0-684-83136-8).

"TECHNOS Interview III: On Tomorrow: Gregory J. E. Rawlins," by Carole Novak (*TECHNOS*, vol. 8, no. 4, Winter 1999, pp. 24-8).

<http://www.technos.net/journal/volume8/4rawlins.htm>

Rawlins is a computer science professor at Indiana University and author of *Moths to the Flame: The Seductions of Computer Technology* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1996. ISBN: 0-262-18183-5) and

*Slaves of the Machine: The Quickening of Computer Technology* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1997. ISBN: 0-262-18176-2).

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Annual subscriptions are \$28/US, \$32/all other countries. Selected articles from each issue are available on the *TECHNOS* Website.