



## 2004 Distance Education Conference Emphasized Effective Communication



More than 100 participants attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Distance Education Conference: *Collaborating for New Possibilities* on October 14–15 in Milton Hall on NMSU's Main Campus. This year's conference emphasized how technology integration and effective communication can enhance teaching and learning in distance education.

Keynote speaker Les Howles from the University of Wisconsin at Madison said collaborating with others can attract students and help retain them through using communication to discover their interests.

"I think faculty need to improve the process for online learning," Howles said. "The online course process begins with the content, not objective." He said online course development should revolve around the design, not how the course is delivered.

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## Students Honor Professor with Roush Award

New Mexico State University College of Extended Learning and College of Health and Social Services (CHSS) faculty member Susan Cardenas was one of eleven honored with the 2004 Donald C. Roush Excellence in Teaching Awards.

The Roush Award, named for a former NMSU executive vice president in recognition of his 35 years of teaching improvement in New Mexico, are based on recommendations from students, deans, department heads, and branch campus directors.

"This award was much more meaningful to me because I was selected by the students," Cardenas said. "It is so gratifying to know that my efforts in the classroom are having a positive effect on my students."

Cardenas said each recipient is awarded \$1,000 to use for teaching purposes. She said she used the money to invest in videos for her classes and a scanner so she can scan handouts for online students. Susan has taught for the Department of Health Science for eight years and also teaches online classes for the CHSS Bachelor of Human and Community distance education degree.

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### Calendar of Events

#### ICT Training Services

**November 11** WebCT in a Day

**November 12** WebCT Quiz Tool

**November 17** WebCT in a Day

**December 14** WebCT in a Day

#### Teaching Academy

**November 12** Cheating: causes, prevention, and turning it into a teachable moment

**November 18** Saving Dollars & Making Sense: Un-Bundling Faculty Duties in Distance Courses

**November 15, 22, and 29** Book Discussion Group: Discussion as a Way of Teaching

Visit the other events and academic events areas of the Teaching Academy web site [<http://www.teaching.nmsu.edu/>], for these and other events.

## Profiles



**Pearl Hawe**  
Educational  
Outreach  
Coordinator,  
College of Health  
and Social Services

College of Health and Social Services Educational Outreach Coordinator Pearl Hawe said she benefited tremendously from the 2004 DE Conference: Collaborating for New Possibilities.

“The level of sessions was wonderful,” Hawe said.

She said she became aware of learner-centered techniques regarding information delivery, cultural diversity online, academic scholarship, and how to deliver material at different levels. These techniques can enhance DE courses.

“The conference placed me in a learning environment similar to a student, so I could see how it feels to learn and grasp new concepts and ideas.”

## LT Usergroup

Learning Technologies Usergroup will meet on Friday November 12. Dr. Mark Workman and Sharon Lalla will present *Beyond Chat: The New Wave of Online Collaborative Tools*. They will explain powerful features of Centra Symposium, such as audio conferencing, video conferencing, peer-to-peer interaction, PowerPoint integration, Web Safari, and application sharing. Contact Tim Barnett-Queen [trbqueen@nmsu.edu] for more information.

## DE Reports from the Colleges

### College of Arts and Sciences

The Communication Studies Department is now offering a Communication Studies minor through the College of Extended Learning. The Department plans to offer two online courses during the Spring 2005 semester. *Organizational Communication* focuses on communication in private and governmental organizations, and will cover research on the communication process. *Verbal Communication* examines rules governing conversational structures such as speech acts, action sequences, topics shifts, humor in conversation, and conversational control. Dr. Walter Zakahi said the minor will offer all coursework online except Communication 265, which is available at branch campuses throughout the state. “During any given year, we will offer four classes, which will include required courses and several electives,” Zakahi said. For more information, contact the Communication Studies Department at 505.646.2801 or e-mail Dr. Zakahi at wzakahi@nmsu.edu.

### College of Business Administration and Economics

ECON 432G *The Economics of Health Care*, uses economic analysis to illuminate the difficult problems associated with providing highly technical and costly health care to our populations. This class may be taken from remote locations by students pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, mid-level managers in health care settings across the region, nursing students on campus of New Mexico State University, upper division business students who may be contemplating jobs in the ever-expanding business of health care, and practicing physicians.

### College of Education

Hybrid Online Reading Endorsement Program — this program will allow practicing teachers to earn a regionally and nationally accredited K–12 Reading Endorsement in as little as one year or four semesters. This graduate program is comprised of seven courses, six of which are three credit units and one of which is an intense summer institute for six credits. Because courses are offered every semester through FA 2006 students may begin coursework at their convenience. This program will feature a number of different approaches. The majority of coursework will be delivered online via WebCT, with onsite visits to NMSU or Instructor visits to school districts. Some courses may use Interactive TV. All coursework for this program may be integrated into a program of study for a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. These courses will allow students to qualify for the New Mexico Public Education Department reading specialist endorsement.—Arturo Rodriguez, M.A., Program Coordinator, Distance Education Reading Endorsement, Dept. of Curriculum & Instruction

Special Education 598 Leadership for Inclusive Schools — The program will assist school leaders in developing schools that are committed to providing free appropriate public education for all students in the least restrictive environment. The course will focus on the knowledge and understanding that school leaders need to transform school cultures into more inclusive schools. The course will include both face-to-face and online requirements. These face-to-face sessions include Friday, Saturday, and Sunday sessions the weekends of November 12–14, February 11–13, and April 30–May 1.

Although the course will be available online beginning November 1, 2004 it is a spring course. For more information contact Teresa Rowilson at 646-2125 or

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Howles said professors tend to design an online lecture as they would a class lecture.

“The big thing in learning to collaborate is getting over the fear of being stupid,” Howles said. “Faculty, often, can be so involved in research that they do not take the time to work with others.”



He recommended that faculty change this by letting go of control, changing their mindset, remembering what is closer in time, and working with a design team.

Another thing faculty can do, Howles said is put themselves into the shoes of the learner.

“Faculty should not make assumptions about the learner needs; instead they should get them involved in the development process,” Howles said.

Other presentations at the conference focused on ideas outlined by Howles.

One presentation, *Cultural Influences on Computer-Mediated Communication*, identified characteristics of computer-mediated communication and cultural dimensions that affect communication such as individualism vs. collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculine vs. feminine.

Another presentation, *Collaboration Does Work* described the benefits of working with a colleague in the students' discipline to learn the learners' educational backgrounds, their other responsibilities, their working schedules, and their experiences with online course delivery.

Naomi Schmidt, one of the presenters for *Collaboration Does Work* said, “Without this information, the course would be similar to a textbook posted on the Internet.”

Another presentation, *Introducing Information Literacy to Distance Education Students: A Modular Approach*, discussed ways for DE faculty to effectively integrate activities fostering use of the library's online resources into teaching by forming partnerships with librarians. Using these resources, information research assignments and instruction can develop information literacy skills. Information research assignments can take many forms other than research papers; several of these forms were presented.



Next year's conference is scheduled for September 29–30, 2005. Information regarding next year's conference will be posted on the Distance Education website soon.

## Resources

Other excellent Internet Resources for faculty, that were highlighted at the *Distance Education Conference: Collaborating for New Possibilities*, include:

**The American Journal of Distance Education** [<http://www.ajde.com/>] — An internationally recognized journal of research and scholarship about American distance education. The journal describes teaching and learning relationships in which the participants are separated and communication is through technical media.

**Library of Crop Technology** [<http://croptechnology.unl.edu/>] — This educational environment presents research-based information through lesson modules focused on plant genetics, genetic engineering, and biochemistry. The lessons are composed of text with images, animations, a hyper-linked glossary, and quizzes.

**An Interactive Astronomy Database for Realtime Review** [[file:///Users/nmsu/Desktop/De%20Conference%20%20CD%20Submissions/vogtn\\_de04/home.html](file:///Users/nmsu/Desktop/De%20Conference%20%20CD%20Submissions/vogtn_de04/home.html)] — This database provides undergraduates with general education science course work. The database is geared for non-science majors, designed for remote laboratory experiments, and has an astronomy focus.

**Distance Education Conference CD** — For a copy of this year's conference CD containing conference materials, papers, handouts, and PowerPoint presentations from the NMSU *Distance Education Conference: Collaborating for New Possibilities*, stop by the College of Extended Learning Office in Milton Hall 185 or call 505-646-4692.

## News and Events

For national and international events, visit the *DE Clearinghouse Conference Database* [[www.uwex.edu/disted/conference.html](http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference.html)].

For recent distance education headlines, visit *Daily News* at *Distance-Educator.com* [[www.distance-educator.dcom/dnews/](http://www.distance-educator.dcom/dnews/)].

For news for university faculty members and administrators, visit *The Chronicle on Higher Education* site [[www.chronicle.com](http://www.chronicle.com)].

For recent campus technology headlines visit *Syllabus* [[www.syllabus.com](http://www.syllabus.com)].

## About UpClose

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Milton Hall 185  
MSC 3WEC  
505 646.4692  
[distance@nmsu.edu](mailto:distance@nmsu.edu)

Editors: Dr. Carmen L. Gonzales and Melody Munson-McGee

Staff: Bethany Bovard, Phillip Johnson, Cassie Nicklen, and Julia Parra

We welcome your ideas, comments, and suggestions for UpClose. To submit a story idea, please contact us no later than the 15th of the month for publication in the following issue.

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[rowlisoin@nmsu.edu](mailto:rowlisoin@nmsu.edu) and Susan Martinez at 937-0479 or [susankmartinez@yahoo.com](mailto:susankmartinez@yahoo.com).

### College of Health and Social Services

The population in this country is aging rapidly. As this occurs the demand on services to meet the health needs of the aging population expands. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, geriatrics and various gerontological fields will grow by more than 35% through 2006, which puts gerontology-related fields among the most rapidly growing employment areas. To fulfill this need, New Mexico State University developed a minor in Gerontology, a six course, 18-semester hour online program designed for health and human service professionals, current students, and others who are interested in acquiring basic knowledge about gerontology and geriatrics.

## The Vice Provost's Corner



While distance education opens opportunities to place-bound and nontraditional students, it also allows new opportunities for faculty to collaborate. This collaboration can enrich the technological aspect of distance education as well as the teaching and learning experience. The 2nd annual NMSU Distance Education Conference: Collaborating for New Possibilities highlighted how teaching and learning in distance education can be enhanced through technology integration and partnerships that reach across town and across oceans to enrich higher education with views from different cultures and perspectives. I would like to thank all of our presenters and participants; we hope that you found the conference enlightening and useful as you advance your own experience as a distance educator.

Staff from the Office of Distance Education are available to work with faculty on course design and development. Additionally, we are collaborating with ICT Training Services, Teaching Academy, and the Library to develop more comprehensive and coordinated faculty assistance programs.

Shortly, we will have information available for next year's conference that will be held on September 29–30, 2005. Our Keynote speaker will be Harvard University's Dr. Chris Dede, who is an expert in distance education and virtual learning. We look forward to working with you.

Dr. Carmen L. Gonzales  
Vice Provost for Distance Education  
Dean of the College of Extended Learning