

**Faculty Professional Growth
Summer Project Final Report Draft**

Use this Word template to compose your responses to questions that are part of the new online summer project application form, and take advantage of spell checking. You can then cut and paste this to the online system.

Do not bother with fancy formatting as none is preserved in the online form.

Summer Project Title

What is IT anyway? Summer Internship with IT

Abstract

Write a concise summary with descriptive information about your project, location, time span, your relationship to it, etc. Include specific information-- since you have completed your project, your knowledge is valuable and can be shared with your colleagues (200 word limit).

For five weeks at the beginning of the summer, 5/24-6/24, I interned with the Instructional Technology (IT) department at Mesa Community College. Better understanding of instructional technology and the IT department helped me to better understand issues that will impact future dialogue between faculty and IT staff about technology. During the internship I worked with the following IT areas:

networking,
systems and security,
institutional web design,
helpdesk, and
databases/special projects.

I spent approximately a week with each main department. In each department I shadowed individuals as they worked, researched and read up on current issues and technologies, and discussed some current projects they were working on.

Outcomes

In a paragraph or two describe what worked well. Did you accomplish your objective(s)? Were you able to complete your summer project as written? If not, what did you modify and why? What did not go as well as expected, if anything? Were there any surprises? **Note: Use the questions as guides for your outcomes. Do not include detailed list of workshops attended, speakers who presented, or a list of items you have seen, heard, or read.**

Although I did need to modify my project, I believe the heart and soul of the project was well accomplished. Just spending time in the IT environment gave me great insight into the day-to-day work of the IT folks. I also became much more aware of the questions, issues, and concerns that plague them as they work with current and new technologies. Spending time with IT not only helped me to better understand our institutional technologies (objective #1), it also helped me to get to know our actual IT department and how they work with one another and others on campus (objective #2).

My major modifications concerned reading and working on projects. I did not read as much as I planned for two reasons. One, this reading was slow because it was different material, different language, an overall different discourse community! Second, I learned more from asking questions and getting answers out of live people. Although I am a critical reader, not understand a lot of the material made reading difficult.

Although I knew I didn't know much about IT, I was truly humbled by hanging out with the IT folks. The best I could do to help them with their projects was to say "In this humble faculty member's opinion..." However, I do know that they value faculty opinion. I like to hope that my opinion, past, present, and future, will continue to help them. However, I won't be helping with actual coding, networking, or security issues anytime soon.

Ultimately I was surprised by how the IT department interfaces, communicates, with the rest of the college. On the one hand, many of the staff in IT are very welcoming and will try to help individuals who come in quickly, efficiently, and with a smile. However, there are some huge IT issues that people on campus should know and understand to change their technology related work habits for the better. But IT doesn't currently have a PR arm that stresses these issues and practices (and describes how/why they are important). Therefore, we have faculty and staff on campus who, more or less, inadvertently mess with the network.

Professional Growth

Your own professional growth is a large part of your project. Your professional growth is important to you, your students, your college, and possibly other colleagues. How did project affect you professionally? What skills did you learn? What environments were you working in and how might your summer project influence your teaching or other responsibilities? Did you gain a different perspective? Was it professionally valuable for you?

This project has great impact on my professional identity. I am now much more knowledgeable about the questions, concerns, and issues related to implementing and maintaining technology on college campuses in general, and MCC specifically. The specific skills I learned are knowledge based. By immersing myself in the IT office, I learned about the primary issues IT is concerned about. I am now better able to ask questions, raise points, and play devil's advocate in department, institutional, and district discussions about technology.

Understanding the technical aspects of these technologies will help my teaching and service activities. Understanding these aspects will also help me to continue my professional development in rhetoric and composition in general, and computers and composition specifically. Understanding the policies behind how and why certain technologies are implemented will help my service activities in the department, at the institution, and in the district. Understanding these policies will also help me to further understand, and even begin to theorize, the interaction of the politics of first year composition with the politics of instructional/information technologies.

Dissemination

How will you share this information with your colleagues, department, students, or campus?

I believe my professional development in this project will most benefit my college as a whole. Whereas the information I learned is not new to the college, my position as a faculty member who understands this information from the IT staff perspective will allow me to better participate in institutional (TLTR, distance learning committee, hiring committees for individuals with technology specializations) and district (Ocotillo) meetings and committees that involve discussions and decisions about technology. As always, my focus is on student learning, but a "real world" understanding of the technological backbone of the institution allows me to better understand and facilitate dialogue between faculty and administration desires and IT's "reality checks."

My professional growth will not solely benefit my college, it will also benefit my colleagues, department, students, and discipline. Our department implemented a wireless laptop classroom this summer and I am now in a better position to help maintain and troubleshoot the hardware and software for the project. We also have a newly restarted English technology committee. And, of course, I will be able to share all of the knowledge I have learned with my colleagues, through discussions inside and outside committee meetings. By understanding the various network and security technologies, along with understanding how and why students call the help desk, I will also be able to better help troubleshoot a variety of issues for my students. For example, I have already implemented a "technology troubleshooting" memo at the beginning of my online courses. There are many disciplinary conferences (CCCCs, Computers & Writing), committees (7Cs), and listservs (techrhet) that I usually participate in on a regular basis. Finally, my internship log and reflections will provide draft material for publication at local (CTL Tech Notes, MCLI forum, MLX) and national (Teaching English in the Two Year College, Computers and Writing, Kairos) publications.