

UNCW Onslow County Criminal Justice Program



Instructional Technology Needs Analysis

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I Executive Summary

The purpose of this research project is to provide needs analysis as to how utilization of technology can enhance the success of the UNCW Criminal Justice program offered in Onslow County. In order to gain insight and information, a variety of methods and sources were used including interviews, surveys and focus group discussions. Most of the directly involved faculty and administrative staff were involved.

As the information gathering process evolved it became apparent that utilization of technology was one of several strategic tactics needed to revitalize a program which had in fact been suspended for a variety of reasons related to low enrollment, faculty issues, and poor planning.

This report provides insight into the specific reasons for failure, along with recommended actions to insure success with a specific focus on the use of current instructional technology techniques and tools.

This may require a long term commitment of resources and funding, however the use of technology to expand programs such as UNCW criminal justice appears to fit many of the strategic objectives laid out in the recent planning documents from the Chancellors office and Academic Affairs, as noted below;

UNCW strategic plan:

- Objective 8: Partner with the public and private sectors to foster economic development throughout the region.
- Objective 2: Achieve more efficient and effective use of existing resources through reallocation, technology, and linkages between planning and budgeting
- Objective 2: Support at the highest-level creative educational and administrative initiatives with time, money and technology services

Academic Affairs strategic plan:

Objective 2: Provide adequate space, equipment, information technology and other resource support for various types of classroom experiences appropriate for each discipline. In collaboration with other divisions of the university, Academic Affairs supports technology-based instruction and learning both on campus and through distance education.

Based on these strategic objectives, strong consideration should be given to the recommended solutions which I feel will insure success of the Criminal Justice Program in Onslow county and may also serve as a model and learning process needed to facilitate the emergence of similar programs which fit UNCW strategic objectives.

II Introduction and Background

The Criminal Justice Program (CRJ) at the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW) operates as part of the College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice. Created approximately 20 years ago, the department has 18 full-time faculty members and offers bachelors degrees in sociology, applied sociology and criminal justice and a minor in sociology all of which are based on the Wilmington campus. The department is currently headed by Dr D. Levy, who is acting as interim chair after replacing Dr. C. Willis.

A bachelor's degree in CRJ requires 45 semester hours in basic studies combined with 42 hours of focused major courses with an overall GPA of 2.0. As of spring 2004 there were approximately 250 students enrolled as CRJ majors comprising 2.5% of all UNCW undergraduate students. Currently 9 courses in the CRJ program are listed as "on-line".

As part of its strategic plan, the university looks for opportunities to expand access to its programs beyond the Wilmington campus in order to reach potential students and fill an educational need. Criminal Justice, along with Nursing and Education were identified as strategic academic areas, which would be focus areas for regional off campus expansion. In order to minimize facility expansion costs, a strategic tactic off partnering with existing academic institutions such as community colleges was adopted.

Following this strategy, several years ago, a partnership was formed with Onslow Community College (OCC) to offer CRJ courses aimed primarily at military personal stationed at camp Lejune in Jacksonville, NC and other locals who have completed the basic studies prerequisites. The concept was to utilize OCC facilities, staffed by UNCW based faculty to offer face-to-face and remote instruction to students. This program had difficulty getting established for a variety of reasons related to low enrollment, faculty staffing issues, and OCC facility conflicts and was ultimately suspended in late 2002.

In 2004, the concept was reactivated and is now set to begin again with a goal of offering 2 CRJ courses in spring 2005 at the (on base) Camp Lejune educational building. This building houses instruction facilities for several universities (i.e. Boston University, Campbell, UNCW) offering mutually exclusive degree programs for military and spouses. As of Nov. 2004 enrollment for these two courses was very low. Currently there are 190 students in education and 15 in nursing programs being operated at Lejune by UNCW

III Project Overview

Project Definition and Scope

The purpose of this research project is to present Dr. Murdock with a needs analysis of how the use of technology tools can be utilized to enhance the success of the learning and instruction processes CRJ at Onslow County. Technology tools are defined as any currently available computer or electronic based instructional technology. The research is focused on the analysis of learners, faculty, instructional context and environment. Given the fluid nature of the program and its history, many non- instructional technology factors such as UNCW strategic issues, organization issues, facilities, faculty skills, etc. became integrally involved as important considerations to be considered.

Information Gathering

Information was gathered using many personal interviews, a faculty focus group meeting, Internet research, and a faculty survey. Attempt was made to obtain information as to opinions and attitudes from all stakeholders directly involved in this program.

Source	Role	Method
Dr. Murdock	UNCW E-learning	Interview
Dr. Levy	CRJ interim Dept Chair	Interview
7 Faculty	CRJ Instructors	Focus group
Beth Barton	Director on site extension programs- OCC	Interview
Nikenjie Tarver	Extension services coordinator- Lejune	Interview
JB Beavers	Director of education- Lejune	Interview
Mr. Cooper	CRJ student and enlisted military	Interview
11 Faculty	All CRJ faculty	Confidential skills and attitude survey
Extant data	Misc statistics, information	Internet Research

Constraints

The research was constrained only by my inability to contact current or past students in the CRJ program (either at UNCW or Onslow) and senior administrators in the UNCW School of Arts and Sciences or Academic Affairs. Also a survey of CRJ graduates was not available.

IV Problem Definition

Current situation: The CRJ program at Onslow has historically failed and appears to be failing again in its restart due to a variety of causes. There are no students! Technology can only be part of the solution, once other issues are resolved.

The ultimate or desired situation would be to provide a sufficient number of students (critical mass) with the ability to achieve their CRJ degree within a reasonable amount of time, without traveling to Wilmington, while:

- Maintaining the UNCW quality of instruction and learning
- Meet revenue/cost targets
- Minimizing/eliminating the additional workload for UNCW faculty
- Minimizing per student expenses by UNCW
- Minimizing UNCW expenses for new facilities & equipment
- Maximizing utilization of instructional technology

V Situation Findings

The research and information gathering produced the following facts, opinions, and attitudes:

A. Context and Environmental Analysis

1. Organizational Environment

- The mission of the Onslow CRJ program is lacking or at least misunderstood amongst the key stakeholders (faculty, admin). Opinions range from mission as “a complete remote degree program” to “just offer a few courses”
- UNCW lacks the shared vision of how technology should be integrated into instruction needed for a sustained and unified commitment to make it work for both on and off campus instruction.
- UNCW Administrators decision to do off campus programs requiring Wilmington based faculty is based on revenue only and lacks the needed focus on quality learning and effective instruction.
- The CRJ program lacks awareness amongst military personnel-potential students. There is no documented evidence of level of interest or demand for this program amongst target students.
- The trend in NC is moving towards automatic acceptance in state universities for students who have graduated from state community colleges.
- As it expands from the traditional on campus classroom instruction, UNCW is caught in an identity crisis in terms of how instruction will be provided and to whom. One end of spectrum is old UNCW; other end of spectrum is totally on line institutions such as Phoenix.

2. Instructional Environment

- CRJ Faculty has full workload now- Onslow viewed as increased workload at a time when real compensation has decreased over last 3 years.
- Currently 4 of 9 CRJ concentration courses and 5 of 20 possible electives listed as “on line”. However these have enrollment caps and opening these up to distance learners will impact on campus students.
- Faculty feels UNCW mishandled previous startup at Onslow
- Lejune facility has limited CRJ classroom space available (1-2 rooms) and only small PC lab.
- OCC currently has said they have no open facilities for CRJ classes, thus one reason for switch to Lejune facility.
- UNCW has high level of instructional technology on campus (A/V, Video production, video conferencing,) as well as strong support base (ISTD).

3. Faculty/Staffing

- Faculty dislikes travel required for face to face instruction at Onslow
- Previous attempts to use remote video classes failed due to poor equipment and a lack of technology support
- OCC library has 12 PC's dedicated to all UNCW students. (CRJ, Nursing, Education)
- UNCW has just added dedicated admissions and advisors staff to OCC campus along with a CRJ program coordinator at Lejune.
- There is a general perception that development of a totally on line course results in it becoming property of the University and thus lose of control to faculty.
- The CRJ faculty has wide ranging technology skills (survey). Some have only minimal skills with little or no technology usage in instruction. A few others are very proactive and have strong on line and web enhanced instructional development skills.
- With an interim CRJ Department Chair in place, the leadership required for this program has not been a priority.
- The teachers for the two planned courses next semester are Nikenjje T. (program coordinator) and a newly hired adjunct prof.
- Inexperienced with unique learner characteristics and styles of military personnel.

B. Learner Analysis

Aside from one brief interview with an x- CRJ student at Lejune, access to learners was constrained. However this and other interviews as well as some external research provided the following information on the expressed target for CRJ Onslow (active and retired military personnel and spouses.)

- Primarily males age 18-30, from diverse backgrounds and cultures
- Low level of computer literacy and “on-line” experience
- Typically are highly motivated individuals

- Used to face to face type military instruction
- Perceived preference for scheduled class time as opposed to on demand in order to be excused from regular duties.
- Demands of military travel for service require long periods of time away from the base.

VI Problem Causes

The utilization of instructional technology to enhance the success of the CRJ program at Onslow county has to date not been a contributing factor due primarily to **lack of implementing a long term strategic plan for the development of the program** itself. This issue has led to what I call a Fire/Ready/Aim approach. In other words, the program was conceived and launched without the proper upfront analysis as to

- What if any is the demand for this program
- What is the critical mass of students needed for success
- How will it be taught and by who
- What will be the impact on existing CRJ program
- What support, equipment, and facilities will be needed
- How can UNCW leverage its existing capabilities
- What are the unique needs of a unique group of potential students

Not having done this in any documented form that I have found or that any stakeholders interviewed were aware of, the program was still introduced without any marketing plan to bring students in. The prior director of on-site extension at OCC was unknown to Lejune personnel. Several persons blamed the current failure on lack of awareness amongst potential Lejune students as well as other potentials such as persons at New River base, Dept of Defense and other government agencies. It was pointed out that Campbell Univ. tried a similar CRJ program at Lejune which failed due to lack of “selling it” to potential students.

In an orderly and systematic approach to any new venture, the program should have been implemented using a plan which was done in the Aim/Ready/Fire sequence whereby the market and product needs were identified, a plan with milestone implementation goals was developed and needed staffing, facilities and equipment were in place. Use of technology should have been a major factor in this plan. Once in place, an effective marketing plan should have been used to attract students.

Lacking the proper approach has led to initial failure and has created a lack of confidence in UNCW admin and questionable motives amongst the faculty.

VII Proposed Solution

At this point, with the program in limbo UNCW administration along with CRJ faculty and Lejune/OCC personnel should be involved in **the development of a strategic and tactical plan aimed at achieving the desired success**, which has been previously defined as:

A sufficient number of students (critical mass) with the ability to achieve their CRJ degree within a reasonable amount of time, without traveling to Wilmington, while:

- Maintaining the UNCW quality of instruction and learning
- Meet revenue/cost targets
- Minimizing/eliminating the additional workload for UNCW faculty
- Minimizing per student expenses by UNCW
- Minimizing UNCW expenses for new facilities & equipment
- Maximizing utilization of instructional technology

VIII CRJ Planning Project Implementation

Scope: The purpose of the planning process would be to involve all key participants and stakeholders in a process of gaining input and information leading to a shared understanding of as to a multi year implementation plan for the CRJ program in Onslow county. At completion, a document would exist which outlines target milestone measures of success, resource requirements, and specific roles and responsibilities for those involved.

Step1. A starting point would be to look at the situation relative to the CRJ Onslow program from a summary of current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and problems:

Opportunities	Problems
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large potential Gov market (Lejune, DoD, New River, and locals.• Fresh start- have exclusive rights to CRJ at Lejune• Proven models of education and nursing off campus• New Department Chair as catalyst for change• Potential good idea for Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CRJ Faculty attitudes and workloads• Evolving Identity crisis in terms of what type Univ. are we.• Lack University wide commitment and plan for use of Instructional technology in all programs• Growing trend to admit all state Comm. College grads• Lack shared definition of CRJ Onslow success

UNCW Strengths	UNCW Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lejune facility and admin staffing in place• Strong technology capabilities and support on campus• Some CRJ faculty strong in technology• Some CRJ courses on line now• Well respected by Lejune education director• WSE instructional technology faculty and masters students• New e-learning director	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most CRJ and all UNCW Faculty training and use of technology lacking• Lack understanding of Military/CRJ market and unique student needs.• Current inability to control instructional quality at Lejune• Limited funding

2. Given these situational factors, a plan should be developed which would maximize the opportunities through leveraging of UNCW strengths, while at the same time dealing with the problems and weaknesses, which could hinder ability to be successful.

A. Plan in process goals or milestones would include:

- Establishment of program goals based on enrollment during planning period.
- Completion of market study for potential students. How many and what do they want?
- Decisions on what courses would be offered and when.
- Decisions on method(s) of delivery and use of instructional technology such as on line, video conferencing, web enhanced, etc.
- Decisions on who will teach and technology skills training and technical assistance needed.
- Needs analysis for facilities and equipment
- Development of a program marketing plan
- Program budget
- Implementation time table with measures of success and organizational responsibilities
- Analysis of project risk factors and strategies to prevent or minimize impact

B. All of above tasks would be accomplished via teams comprised of representatives From faculty and administration, with subject matter experts consulted where needed. Project manager would be involved in facilitating all teams.

C. It is estimated this planning process can be completed in 2-3 months and the implementation of preparing course offerings along with a program-marketing plan could be done in the summer of 05. This would allow for a successful program restart in fall of 05

3. In order to make this successful, a few things need to happen in advance;
 - An expressed commitment by Sr. UNCW admin to this program in terms of a fresh start and involvement by all levels in developing a feasible solutions plan, which would be acceptable to Admin, Faculty, and Students.
 - Establishment of a part-time project manager, who's responsibility it would be to insure success of planning and implementation.

IX Conclusion

As it stands now most of the issues that caused the initial failure of CRJ in Onslow are still prevalent and thus the program appears doomed to a similar fate when restarted in spring 05. A second failure will make eventual success even harder. The utilization of various instructional technologies has the ability to be a major part of the programs success and learning in terms of its ability to:

1. Deal with different learning styles and unique requirements of military personnel.
2. Minimize travel and burden for faculty serving remote instructional delivery locations.
3. Provide on flexible on demand learning and assessment.
4. Utilize new technologies to engage the students in self directed learning
5. Be cost effective and meet measurable instructional quality guidelines
6. Eliminate need for any facility expenditures
7. Expand availability of course offerings and eliminate minimal enrollments required for face-to-face classes.
8. Provide an opportunity for interested faculty to be come distance learning experts
9. Leverage current technology support groups on campus.
10. Create a model for future UNCW distance learning programs

However, in order for instructional technologies to play a part in the success of Onslow CRJ the above-mentioned planning process and implementation management must be in place.