

September 2, 1998

MEMORANDUM

TO: Community College Presidents

FROM: Brenda H. Rogers
Vice President for Administration

SUBJECT: State Board Reserve Projects

Attached are summary reports on the following statewide projects funded by the State Board Reserve Fund for 1997-98:

1. Planning and Preparation for the Virtual Community College of North Carolina (*Attachment 1*)
2. Web Access for the DAC Shared Library System (*Attachment 2*)
3. Program Audit Software for Use by Program Auditors and Colleges (*Attachment 3*)
4. Developmental Program Evaluation, Data Collection, Analysis, and Reporting System (*Attachment 4*)
5. Prison Programs Accountability (*Attachment 5*)

Please feel free to contact me or Bob Blackmun, Associate Vice President for Information Resources and Technology, if you would like additional information about any of these projects.

c: Dr. Elizabeth L. Johns

**PLANNING AND PREPARATION FOR
THE VIRTUAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**Executive Summary
August 31, 1998**

The project, funded by the State Board of Community Colleges, includes two components that are essential to planning for distance learning in the North Carolina Community College System:

1. To explore and plan the administrative structure for the virtual community college, and
2. To plan and begin development of software for the Internet-based interface with students throughout the state.

As a result of the efforts in the first component, reports and recommendations based on visits to the Arizona Learning System for Arizona Community Colleges, the University of Phoenix and the Colorado Virtual Community College have been provided to the NCCCS Distance Learning Council to assist the council's efforts in developing recommendations for policies and coordination of distance learning in the community college system.

The investigation alternatives for providing Internet-based student support services resulted in a proposal to purchase equipment and software for a pilot project with two community colleges. Due to concerns about ongoing costs and funding, the acquisition and implementation of the pilot project were deferred.

Fiscal Report

A total of \$5,028.87 was expended on travel and related expenses for the visits to Arizona and Colorado as described above.

WEB ACCESS FOR THE DAC SHARED LIBRARY SYSTEM

Executive Summary & Year-End Report August 31, 1998

Project Description

The State Board of Community Colleges approved the use of Reserve Funds to purchase UniPAC hardware and software needed to provide Internet access to the library resources of the 39 community colleges participating as full members of the NCCCS Data Automation Center (DAC). The purpose of this project was to provide expanded access to the combined library resources via the interface citizens are most comfortable with

- web browser technology from outside the Learning Resources Center (LRC) and
- Windows technology on character-based terminal technology within the LRC.

Through the use of the UniPAC, the community college libraries will

- provide increased library services to North Carolina's citizens;
- enhance the image of the NCCCS by making library materials more readily available;
- use taxpayers' money more efficiently by sharing resources currently owned; and
- lay the foundation for cooperative collection development and management.

Project Outcomes and Results

When this project was funded, it was funded for the purchase of hardware and software. Because the DAC was established through a Service Provider Agreement in which Ameritech provided the hardware, software, and personnel to administer the DAC, the System Office discussed with Ameritech the feasibility of incorporating the UniPAC into the existing lease/rental contract. The costs associated with this arrangement significantly increased the cost of the UniPAC on an annual basis.

As fiscal agent for this project, the System Office purchased the hardware and software needed to implement UniPAC and negotiated a purchase agreement with Ameritech which was approved by the State Board in June. Through the agreement terms negotiated, Ameritech will provide the ongoing daily administration and service for UniPAC in the same manner as it is currently providing for the DAC. The member colleges will pay an equal share of the annual maintenance costs, as agreed in the project proposal.

The UniPAC hardware and software were installed at the central site on August 10, 1998. Two colleges, Pitt Community College and Roanoke-Chowan Community College, have been selected as test sites. The PAC for Windows software has been installed at these sites, but testing has not yet begun. The DAC software must be upgraded to Release 172 in order for the current version of UniPAC to have full functionality. Release 172 was installed on August 27. A committee of representatives from the test site colleges, Library Resources, and the Ameritech System Administrator will begin making decisions about setup that will enhance the user-friendly features of the UniPAC and DAC and testing the web access. When setups and testing have been completed, the PAC for Windows software will be installed at each of the DAC member libraries as requested and introductory training provided to the library staff.

**Web Access for the DAC Shared Library System
Executive Summary & Year-End Report—Page 2**

When UniPAC is fully operational, it will have a number of positive effects on Learning Resources Centers and the DAC library catalog.

- Internet access will be available to any North Carolina citizen using web browser technology, including public school students, small business personnel, students enrolled in distance learning programs, and many others.
- The DAC library catalog will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Registered DAC library card holders will be able to initiate their own interlibrary loan requests for DAC library resources from any remote location--home, work, etc.
- DAC reports and statistics will be used to make cooperative decisions among DAC LRC personnel for purchasing library materials.
- DAC libraries will have available a powerful tool in their efforts to maintain regional accreditation by the Commission on Colleges for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.
- Persons using the broadcast searching feature of the UniPAC product will be able to search remote library databases conforming to the Z39.50 search standard, without re-keying their search terms.

Cost of Implementation

Database Hardware	\$ 9,542.00
Initial Installation of Software:	34,378.00
Completion of Module Functionality Tests	<u>2,314.00</u>
Total System Costs from SBCC Reserve Funds	\$46,234.00

**Web Access for the DAC Shared Library System
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Participating Colleges

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
Beaufort County Community College
Bladen Community College
Blue Ridge Community College
Brunswick Community College
Cape Fear Community College
Central Carolina Community College
Cleveland Community College
Coastal Carolina Community College
College of The Albemarle
Craven Community College
Durham Technical Community College
Edgecombe Community College
Fayetteville Technical Community College
Gaston College
Halifax Community College
Haywood Community College
James Sprunt Community College
Johnston Community College
Mayland Community College
McDowell Technical Community College
Nash Community College
Pamlico Community College
Piedmont Community College
Pitt Community College
Randolph Community College
Richmond Community College
Roanoke-Chowan Community College
Rockingham Community College
Rowan-Cabarrus Community College
Sampson Community College
Sandhills Community College
Southeastern Community College
Southwestern Community College
Stanly Community College
Vance-Granville Community College
Wake Technical Community College
Wayne Community College
Wilson Technical Community College

**PROGRAM AUDIT SOFTWARE
FOR USE BY PROGRAM AUDITORS AND COLLEGES**

**Executive Summary
August 31, 1998**

The purpose of this project was to develop new program audit software as well as to enhance the existing program audit software that is used by the program auditors and college-level program audit personnel. This project encompasses three areas of need: (1) update of the existing program audit software in the curriculum area to enable it to work with semester-based courses; (2) enhancements to the existing program audit software to provide additional functionality; and (3) development of new program audit software to provide new and enhanced auditing capability. Development and implementation of this software at the colleges for use by the program auditors and college staff will further automate this process and greatly enhance their capability for efficient and effective program audits. This software will increase the efficiency of the staff by automating many of the manual processes that are currently used. This will allow the staff to do a more thorough audit at an individual college as well as increase the number of colleges that one auditor can do in a given time period. It will also enhance the ability of the colleges to do self-auditing of their programs.

While there is currently software in place to assist with the program audit process, some of it, as outlined above, is unable to work with semester-based courses, thus rendering it unusable. In addition, there are numerous requests from the program auditors for enhancements to the existing software that would provide greater functionality for all of the users of the software, program auditors as well as college personnel. Many of these requests are also the result of changes in policies and procedures such as those contained in the 23 NCAC. There are also requests for development of new software for new and enhanced auditing capability. In addition, there is the need for the ability for greater management oversight of the work of the Program Auditing Section.

The impact of this project is to provide greater capability to the program auditors and college staff for efficient and effective auditing of college programs. It also provides better management oversight and more efficient use of personnel resources of the Program Auditing Section. This software will be available for continued use by the program auditors and college staff. There will be both current and future benefits from the implementation of this project.

The software for this project is currently under development. Upon completion of the software development phase of the project, there will be a thorough test of the software by the program auditors and appropriate college staff. Once the software has been thoroughly tested, it will then be available for use by all of the program auditors and for implementation at all of the colleges. The project is scheduled for completion by December 31, 1998.

**DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM EVALUATION,
DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND REPORTING SYSTEM**

**Executive Summary
August 31, 1998**

The purpose of this project was to develop a software system for collection, analysis, and reporting of data on students in developmental programs. A task force of personnel from the colleges and the System Office identified the need for collection, analysis, and reporting of the data and identified the data elements to be collected.

This project provides a comprehensive data collection, analysis, and reporting system for developmental students. The system provides essential data both for the colleges and the System Office. From the data collected at the System Office, reports will be produced to respond to the numerous federal and state requests for data on the performance of developmental students. Prior to this project, the data were not available to respond to these requests with the quantity, or quality, of information that this system will provide.

This system creates a developmental student cohort file on the local college administrative computer system. From this, summary reports are generated and transmitted to the System Office. A consolidated summary file is created at the System Office and used to generate developmental cohort reports for all of the colleges. The reports generated by this system provide information in the following areas: (1) general enrollment and demographic information on the cohort; (2) retention information and follow-up grade information; (3) graduate information on students in the cohort; and (4) developmental course loads of recent graduates. In addition, the consolidated summary file can be used to generate ad hoc reports on an "as needed" basis as additional report requirements are defined.

The impact of this project will be to allow college and System Office personnel to have access to a comprehensive set of information on developmental students. This information will be used in many ways (both in the current year and in future years): (1) reporting of required data both at the federal and state levels; (2) responding to the legislature on developmental student performance; and (3) analysis of student performance at both the college and systemwide levels. The data collection and analysis capability provided by this project provides college and System Office staff with the information to properly evaluate the programs that are being offered and to respond to the requests for information that occur on a frequent basis.

The software for this project has been completed and is currently being tested at one of the colleges. Upon completion of the software test at the college, the software will be incorporated into the IIPS applications software package and released to all of the colleges for their use.

PRISON PROGRAMS ACCOUNTABILITY

Executive Summary

August 31, 1998

The purpose of this project was to develop a comprehensive reporting system to meet the requirement of the General Assembly to report in September 1998 on the educational offerings of the North Carolina Community College System to inmates in Department of Correction facilities. This project provides the reporting system to facilitate the completion of this evaluation of outcomes for the General Assembly.

While there exist student data systems that identify individual students as inmates, there is no comprehensive system in place to allow for the association of those inmates with a specific prison. The intent of the General Assembly is that we evaluate program effectiveness on a prison-by-prison basis. This project enabled the System Office to identify and make the necessary software modifications to allow current student data reporting systems to meet the increased mandate for prison program reporting and accountability.

This project provided for additional collection and analysis of data to complete the evaluation of outcomes to be reported to the General Assembly. Additional software development was also completed to enable the reporting of data by prison unit for registrations and FTE and to automate the process of determining those prison classes that exceed the 51 percent non-completion rate rule.

Prior to this project, there were no comprehensive means of gathering or evaluating data related to inmate programming within the system. This system allows for more efficient use of staff time at the colleges and the System Office; creates a mechanism for policy analysis; and allows the System to represent its inmate programming efforts to the Legislature and others in a more thorough, timely, and comprehensive manner.

This project has resulted in appropriate data collection and analysis to meet the requirements for reporting to the General Assembly in September 1998. The information that is reported to the General Assembly will be shared with all of the community colleges and appropriate staff at the System Office. Future data collections, analyses, and reports which are a result of the additional data collection and analysis provided by this project will also be shared with the colleges and staff at the System Office. This project has provided a comprehensive accountability system which will allow the System to better represent its efforts and outcomes in inmate education.