2009-2010 Grant Proposals

Amod Lele
"Northeast Regional Computing Program Conference"
Pedagogy Travel Grant

I hope to attend the 2010 Northeast Regional Computing Program (NERCOMP) conference in Providence, RI on March 9-10, in support of my role as instructional technologist at Stonehill. I intend to learn about new directions and trends in instructional technology and design, and share the results with Stonehill faculty and administration after my return.

This conference is the main annual resource for academic technology personnel in the Northeastern US to share their experiences and ideas in a rapidly changing field. The theme of the conference is "The Next-Generation University: Rethinking IT in Disruptive Times"; panels will pay special attention to the challenges currently posed to universities by the combination of rapidly changing technology and difficult economic times. The official description of the 2010 conference is as follows:

"This year's conference will explore how our institutions and organizations are managing economic challenges, forging new visions, and integrating new information technology paradigms and approaches. How are emerging technological possibilities and economic conditions changing what 'university' means? How are our IT organizations surviving and finding ways to thrive and lead the way under these new conditions? How are we evolving to meet the changing academic and administrative priorities of our institutions? What emerging technology opportunities and models are supporting the core missions of our schools and our associated organizational and professional development goals?"

Conference sessions will take place on Tuesday March 9 from 8:30 to 5:20, followed by a brief reception; and Wednesday March 10, from 8:30 to 4:05, at the Rhode Island Convention Center (RICC) in Providence. Some sample session topics include:

- Principles of progressive pedagogy and their application in instructional technology
- "Shoestring projects": instructional technology projects completed with limited resources
- Engaging faculty in the process of innovative course design with technology
- Benefits and pitfalls of blogging, cloud computing and virtual worlds in the classroom
- Roundtable discussion of instructional technologists' experiences
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As Stonehill is currently in the process of reevaluating its instructional technology programs, and implementing the new technologies as ANGEL and Banner, I believe that the campus could benefit greatly from the experience of other area institutions on these and other technology-related topics. I intend to learn other institutions' case studies and best practices in a way that will enhance teaching and technology support at Stonehill in the coming years.

In my capacity as instructional technologist I am currently working on a project to explore the organization of instructional technology at Stonehill's peer and aspirant institutions, to support Stonehill's plans to reorganize its own instructional technology support. I am confident that the knowledge I gain at NERCOMP will enhance the information I am able to provide in this consulting role.

I intend to share the information gained at the NERCOMP conference with the wider Stonehill community by holding a brown-bag lunch for fellow faculty later in the semester. I will also share ideas with faculty who consult with me during my hours in the faculty computer lab, and with fellow instructional technology staff (Estelle Wenson and Jan Harrison).