Reviews

The TLT Group - the Teaching, Learning and Technology affiliate of the AmericanAssociation of Higher Education (AAHE). Steven W. Gilbert, President. One DupontCircle, NW, Suite 360, Washington, D.C.20036-1110. E-mail: info@tltgroup.org

It is rather unusual to review an entire organization, but this group provides several products and services that I find to be of great value to faculty, administration and other professionals involved in distance education and information technology. Indeed, anyone interested in employing educational technology to improve teaching and learning can benefit from the information that the TLT Group has to offer.

The two key elements of this organization are the AAHESGIT Listserv, and the Teaching, Learning and Technology Roundtable (TLTR) Program. The meaning of the acronym for the listserv is not specifically detailed on their web page, but I assume it stands for the American Association of Higher Education Special Interest Group on Information Technology. It is a moderated electronic discussion group on issues of teaching, learning, technology and educational change, and it currently has over 6500 subscribers. Steven W. Gilbert is the moderator, and the group provides a lively forum for raising questions and exploring the experiences of professionals in the field. To subscribe, send the message "Subscribe AAHESGIT yourfirstname yourlastname " to: listproc@list.cren.net.

The TLTR Program encourages the formation of local Roundtables within academic institutions to enhance collaboration and strategic planning by all those individuals and groups in the institution working to improve teaching and learning with information technology. The goals of the program are to:

- Invent and support new teaching roles to match new learning needs--and find ways to use technology to support these new linkages;

- Improve internal communication and collaboration;

- Focus personal and institutional resources on shared goals;

- Develop environments in which it is safe to take the risks needed to improve learning and teaching in times of constant, accelerating change; and

- Identify and continue to support the institution's fundamental values and educational goals while embracing new technology options.

More than 400 colleges and universities have launched local TLT Roundtables, includingMIT, Purdue, Kansas State and the University of California system. The TLT Group will assistinstitutions to start a local Roundtable by providing consultation, workshops and other services.They also offer a Network Subscription, which offers extended consultation, workbooks andguides, discounts on TLT events and publications, and an advisory role in TLT programdevelopment. The cost is a rather modest $750 annually for a Level One subscription, withdiscounts available for consortia, state systems or groups of institutions. More information can befound at: http://www.tltgroup.org/programs/round.html.

Another valuable service provided by the TLT Group is the Flashlight Program, which helps institutions study and improve educational uses of technology by creating tool kits such as the Cost Analysis Handbook and Flashlight Online. The latter is a Web-based service for creating and administering surveys, including the ability to summarize student responses and share study designs. Two of the current surveys available are Evaluating and Improving the Use of Presentation Software, and Evaluating Web-based Distance Education in Nursing. Once again, organizations must join the Flashlight Network to receive materials and other benefits. Prices range from around $4000 to $5500 annually, depending upon total FTE enrollment.

A fourth component of TLT is the EASI Program, for Equal Access to Software and Information. This is a resource for individuals with disabilities, and provides up-to-date information and guidance on adaptive computer technology and other means of access to information technologies. EASI offers a large Web site, listserv discussion lists, an online journal, and regular multimedia Webcasts and workshops. The Web site can be accessed at: http://www.rit.edu/~easi/.

This brief review by no means exhausts the range of materials and services available from the TLT Group, some free and some with a fee. There are annual Summer Institutes, PowerPoint presentations, papers, multimedia streaming presentations, and more. Examples and further information can be found at the main Web site at: http://www.tltgroup.org/. I can unreservedly recommend the group, and particularly the AAHESGIT listserv, as an excellent resource for keeping up with the changing landscape of higher education.

Ron Thomas
University of Florida