

AFTER FACULTY DEVELOPMENT: CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

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Vassar offers a number of possible avenues to pursue faculty development in the area of computer literacy. The first step is usually to take an introductory course through Vassar's Computer Literacy Program. Faculty participants receive a grant of \$500 and are expected to teach a follow-up course involving classroom use of the computer.

My own experience in teaching follow-up courses since 1983 has been a mixture of success and frustration. I have succeeded in producing language learning software attractive to students. It has been interactively used by them and has improved their performance. I have ongoing projects for more sophisticated courseware. I was, however, initially alarmed at the amount of time required to produce software, and at the difficulty of implementation. Many of the problems I faced as a novice programmer have by now been alleviated. Some of the solutions which have been provided by colleagues and by the institution are:

- (1) Provision of new and updated computer hardware.
- (2) Availability of high-level courseware authoring languages.
- (3) New facilities, including a high tech language laboratory offering space for computing and the prospect of producing courseware using both computer and video.
- (4) Ongoing grant support and released time for faculty development.
- (5) Encouragement and funding from the administration to participate in conferences and workshops.
- (6) Membership in the Inter-University Consortium for Educational Computing.
- (7) Formation of faculty interest groups for educational computing (e.g., interdepartmental group for text analysis).

The results of these measures have so far been extremely encouraging, and Vassar is committed to supporting faculty producing courseware for classroom use. An opportunity explored this summer through Vassar's ICEC membership consisted of an on-site training workshop at Carnegie-Mellon University. Faculty worked on advanced workstations with CMU Tutor, a new courseware authoring language featuring interactive graphics; they are to complete their projects back at Vassar in time for a November conference at CMU.

There continues to be a dearth of appropriate software for our students, and few faculty are as yet involved in courseware production. The need for and benefits of such materials are great, but considerable training and motivation on the part of faculty are essential in order for them to become directly involved. This challenge can be met on a departmental as well as an institutional level. The language departments at Vassar are working with the administration to search for ways to provide funding for additional support personnel and released time for faculty production of courseware as part of our upgrading of language laboratory facilities. Similar efforts are underway in other departments at Vassar.