

***2006 Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL) Grant Program***  
**Identifying Information (Cover Sheet)**

**Title:**

Development, Dissemination, and Marketing of Research-Based Design Curriculum Offered On-Line

**Principle Investigator:**

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## **Development, Dissemination, and Marketing of Research-Based Design Curriculum Offered On-Line**

### **Project Description**

A Technology-Enhanced Learning Grant for the development, dissemination, and marketing of research-based design courses offered on-line will improve educational access for two audiences: current design students and practicing professionals seeking continuing education opportunities. The curriculum is innovative in that it will disseminate research-based course content to audiences that otherwise have limited access to scholarly research. An on-line format is important to the accessibility of such content. Two curricular products will be developed with this grant: a Macromedia Breeze Web Cast and an On-Line Mini-Course, which will allow for routinized development of future courses using production protocol, user evaluation tools, and on-line course management features for each product. Having the proper protocols, processes, and materials to support these two products, as well as the necessary marketing, will assure future sustainability of the curriculum. This curriculum is a solution for the technology-literate yet underserved populations of design students and practicing designers. It will have broad programmatic application in undergraduate design courses and as continuing education courses or professional development units (hereafter referred to as CEUs) for the design practice community locally and globally.

The products proposed will have broad programmatic application for design education in multiple disciplines including technology-enhanced classroom education and distance learning curricula both within and outside the University of Minnesota, effectively eliminating institutional boundaries. As CEUs for busy practicing designers the format is conveniently accessible anytime and requires minimum bandwidth. Launch of both products using the existing University of Minnesota Web site *InformeDesign*<sup>®</sup> ([www.informedesign.umn.edu](http://www.informedesign.umn.edu)) will allow immediate dissemination to a national and international audience with limited cost.

These two products will be the foundation of an evolving on-line curriculum comprised of research-based content that is needed by today's interdisciplinary designers. The Interior Design Educators Council (IDEC) Academy for Continuing Education has identified gaps in educational content that reflect students' and practitioners' needs. Learning outcomes for the proposed curriculum will reflect this advisory body's recommendations as they become available. Long-term, we will develop products for this curriculum based on the protocols developed with this grant and the research-based content contained on the *InformeDesign* Web site. Additionally, the proposed and future Web Casts and the On-Line Mini-Courses will be disseminated using *InformeDesign*, which will increase efficiencies of an existing resource and greatly increase access to University of Minnesota expertise.

*InformeDesign* is a Web site that is owned and operated by the University of Minnesota. Its mission is to facilitate design practitioners' and students' use of current, research-based information as a decision-making tool in the design process. It features a searchable database of over 1300 Research Summaries (continually growing), a monthly newsletter *Implications*, and Web Casts on design issues. It was launched in 2002 and has over 9000 registered users throughout the world. Its use is climbing and has an average of 60,000 pages downloaded monthly. The cornerstone of *InformeDesign* is the Research Summary, which is a two- to three-page summary of a research article from a refereed journal. The *InformeDesign* staff writers (about eight undergraduate and graduate research assistants) transform research findings in journal articles into evidence-based design criteria for publication as a Research Summary.

The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) initially funded *InformeDesign* in 2001 for four years for \$1.18 million. Additional funding has been received from ASID to continue through the 2007 fiscal year (9/30/07), although the funding is not at the same level as the initial grant. With this decrease in funding, we must develop revenue-generating products that are both educational and available via the Internet. Continuing education enrollment from Web Casts and On-Line Mini courses will be a fee-based service. Fees collected will contribute to sustaining the College of Human Ecology's teaching and engagement goals reflecting design technology.

### **Rationale**

The design audience includes architects, landscape architects, interior designers, and other design-related professions. Design practitioners in North America are required by their professional organizations and

their jurisdictional regulatory boards to complete CEUs. There is a need for various levels of information from introductory CEUs for entry-level designers to advanced CEUs for senior-level designers. This information must be research-based, as the design discipline is moving toward use of evidence-based design criteria. InformeDesign is the only Web site dedicated to providing designers with evidence-based design criteria. There is also a need for specialized topics to be presented in on-line format. There are many CEU courses given around North America each year, but few are available on-line and of the quality and format that we intend to present, and seldom is their content research-based. Our curriculum will be asynchronous and assuming content is current, will remain available for two- to three-years on the InformeDesign Web site.

The design classroom is in need of research-based course content focused on specific topics. These topics are timely, often changing, and evolve from new research published about design and human behavior. Despite an international audience, use of the InformeDesign Web site as a tool for use in the academic classroom, both at the University of Minnesota and around the world, has not been developed. The Web Casts and On-Line Mini-Courses will be required course components in several DHA courses, initially DHA 2612 Interior Materials and Specification and DHA 4615W Interior Design Research.

We have completed an analysis of the revenue required to generate the curricular products and provide income to sustain the curriculum. We can be successful by developing content from a reliable source, disseminating it using an existing Web site, generating a revenue stream, marketing to a worldwide audience, and making use of the University of Minnesota's Digital Media Center's expertise.

### **Products**

The Web Cast is a recorded presentation using Macromedia Breeze that will improve access to research-based design curricula for local and worldwide audiences. Recognized experts will use Breeze to record 60- to 90-minute audiovisual presentations. In an asynchronous format, presenters' voices will be heard as informative slides, graphics, and images are presented on the users PCs. The convenience of a Web Cast is the ability for users to watch it whenever and wherever they choose, whether as a group of designers in their firm's conference room, with a client, at their desk, or in their own home. Additionally, the Web Casts will be used in the design classroom to bring experts into the classroom presenting the most current content.

The On-Line Mini-Course will be comprised of a series of Research Summaries, an issue of *Implications*, and occasionally, a Web Cast that all pertain to evidence-based design criteria for a specific topic. Users will review a set of on-line course materials, including visual images, and respond to evaluation questions or scenarios, depending on the audience. Different content evaluation methods will be developed for design practitioners and students.

New site content will be developed on the InformeDesign Web site that provides users with information about the new fee-based curriculum available to them. The course descriptions, objectives, tasks, evaluation instruments, instructions for use, and how to gain continuing education credit will all be included as well as tentative launch dates for new Web Casts and On-Line Mini-Courses.

### **Marketing**

We have access to many of the professional organizations whose members will benefit from this curriculum. However, we do not have marketing expertise and do not know the best way to market this curriculum to derive revenue generation. Likewise, we have access to the undergraduate design programs across North America, but need a marketing consultant to develop strategies that address a diverse Internet audience. Additionally, a graphic design student is needed to develop the on-line marketing materials. The marketing consultant will:

- a. Assist in developing business goals and identifying target markets
- b. Develop suitable objectives and key messages
- c. Assist in the process of formally or informally testing key messages
- d. Plan marketing strategies and recommend future steps required for successful implementation
- e. Develop a timeline for approved strategies to meet revenue generation goals

- f. Develop specific marketing tactics that are implemented on-line (e.g., media planning, publication design, and production)

### Project Evaluation

We will consult with the DMC to design and conduct an evaluation of the project outcomes. The metrics for this evaluation will include, but are not limited to, the documented use of Web Casts and On-Line Mini-Courses; the number of viewers; audience profile and their satisfaction with the products, i.e., helpful in gaining an understanding of the topic, provide evidence-based design criteria for their study or practice, etc. This evaluation will be completed in a timely way after the launch of the product. The DMC staff members will help determine other metrics that are appropriate for these products and their outcomes.

### Timeline

<b>Web Cast and On-Line Course Tasks</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Identify topics and authors of the Web Cast and On-Line Mini-Course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Web Cast: <i>Branding via the Built Environment</i>, Gail Brachett, Gensler Architecture, Los Angeles</li> <li>On-Line Mini Course: <i>Sustainable Design</i>, Denise Guerin, Ph.D., Professor, PI of TEL Grant</li> </ul>	Completed
Complete curriculum review via IDEC's Academy	4/1/06
Develop the Protocol <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process used to identify topic, author, audience, content approval, and testing development, etc.</li> <li>Develop written materials to meet legal requirements such as copyright, contracts, evaluation, continuing education approval</li> <li>Process used to implement the products such as inputting on the Web site, launching</li> <li>Process used to collect fee from practitioners audience and non-UMN students</li> <li>Other (there will be items added as they are identified!)</li> </ul>	8/31/06
Produce the On-Line Mini-Course	8/31/06
Produce the Web Cast	9/30/06
Develop marketing plan that will be replicated for each event's launch	9/30/06
Develop new Web pages for Web Cast and On-Line Mini-Course	9/30/06
Launch Web Cast and On-Line Mini-Course	10/31/06
Evaluate Web Cast and On-Line Mini-Course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop evaluation tool in cooperation with DMC</li> <li>Implement evaluation</li> </ul>	3/31/07
Develop Final Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of products (Web Cast and Mini-Course)</li> <li>Present protocol materials</li> <li>Analysis of evaluation</li> <li>Identify revisions to be made in process</li> </ul>	5/20/07

### Budget

<b>Item</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Total</b>
Fee to computer programmer	McDonogh Brothers, develop new Web pages (curriculum/evaluation), monitoring, trouble-shooting	\$2000
Stipend/ travel expenses to Web Cast author	Gail Brachett, Gensler Design, Los Angeles, prepare and present content	\$1500
Summer stipend to PI	Develop protocol, materials, and evaluation instrument (w/DMC), conduct and analyze evaluation, supervise staff	\$6000
Web Cast via Breeze	Keith Brown, CHE Technology	0
Fee for marketing consultant	Kristy Bertsch, Marketing Communications, LLC, marketing plan	\$4000
Undergraduate student assistant	Prepare marketing materials, write related pieces	\$2750
Undergraduate student assistant	Review literature and write Research Summaries for use in curriculum	\$2750
<b>Total Amount Required</b>		<b>\$19,000</b>
<b>TEL Grant Request</b>		<b>\$9,500</b>
<b>Matching Funds (Guaranteed by the College of Human Ecology e-Scholarship Committee)</b>		<b>\$9,500</b>