

## **Using Internet-Based Videoconferencing to Expand Opportunities in Teacher Education at Purdue University**

### **Overview**

Teacher education programs at Purdue University are expanding the use of Internet-based video conferencing to connect with schools and other professional settings. These high-quality, interactive voice, video, and data conferencing connections can be used in many ways, including classroom observations, distance teaching by Purdue students, virtual field trips, guest speakers, professional discussions, and supervision of student teachers. Such videoconferencing enables increased opportunities to interact with P-12 programs and schools, especially those in diverse settings located a distance from Purdue's West Lafayette campus.

### **Technical Requirements**

The conferencing technology being used is Internet-based and uses a standard H.323 Internet protocol (IP). The Purdue College of Education uses Polycom-brand videoconferencing equipment. A growing number of P-12 schools already have Polycom or compatible units. If participating schools do not have videoconferencing equipment, room-based units are available on loan through the teacher-education program at Purdue. Purdue faculty and staff who are involved with teacher education can use equipment available on campus through their respective departments and/or through the College of Education. This equipment includes various types of Polycom units for use in individual offices, conference rooms, and classroom settings.

In addition to the H.323 videoconferencing equipment, successful connections require high speed Internet access (also known as broad band and T1) and a monitor or other display equipment.

Technical support staff at the school or other field-based location will need to be able to configure their network to enable the videoconferencing connection. Often this requires a configuration of the building or school district's firewall. Technical support staff at the Purdue College of Education are available to collaborate with field-based technical staff in setting up and configuring the systems.

### **Procedures**

This effort is coordinated by the Purdue University Teacher Education Program Convener Council, in collaboration with the Associate Dean for Learning and Engagement and the Office of Field Experiences, in the College of Education. The project steering committee includes representatives from all six Purdue Colleges involved in teacher education: Agriculture, Consumer and Family Sciences, Education, Liberal Arts, Science, and Technology. Interested faculty and staff should work with their program convener and the Office of Field Experiences to coordinate their involvement and interactions with schools. The project steering committee is developing procedures for maintaining records of all interactions, overseeing equipment loaned to schools, and meeting Purdue Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements for human subjects for non-videotaped connections.

Permission forms will be required for all students whose images will be transmitted over the Internet. A standardized form will be provided, which individual Purdue students and P-12 students (and their parent/guardian) will need to sign. Participating Purdue faculty and staff will be responsible for working with field-based personnel to obtain signed student permission forms prior to specific interactions, and for obtaining IRB approval for more specialized interactions such as those that include videotaping and other types of data collection.

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