

**CNI Fall 1999 Task Force Meeting  
Project Briefing Session**

**Draft Proposal for a Distance Education  
Professional Development Program  
on Assessment**

During this Project Briefing, the presenters will explore the feasibility of developing a professional development program on assessment for the CNI constituency.

**Background:** Academic institutions are under increasing pressure to justify expenses in developing a network infrastructure, providing computing equipment and facilities, and increasing access to electronic information resources. Those pressures come from university administrators, state legislators, and others. Often the IT organization or library are asked to provide output measures or other evidence of the differences that technology and electronic information resources make to learning, research, and service. In addition, IT organizations and libraries need data to make decisions on how to allocate resources, how to determine user satisfaction with services, and how to make a case for the resources they need. Developing appropriate assessment measures, tailored to individual institutional needs, can assist institutions in understanding user demand and satisfaction, how resources are allocated, and what impact networking and networked information has on their constituencies.

**CNI's Role:** Disseminating best practices and current information on networked information topics to a broad audience is one aspect of CNI's work. CNI has prepared reports, partnered with others to hold regional conferences, and presented specialized professional development workshops to disseminate findings of its programs, such as New Learning Communities. CNI has worked with partners in the area of assessing the networked environment and developed a full day professional development workshop that was held at the ACRL National Conference in Spring, 1999. Developed by Charles McClure, currently at Florida State University, Betsy Wilson, Steve Hiller, and Nana Lowell from the University of Washington, and Joan Lippincott, CNI, the workshop curriculum was carefully planned and was well-received by the audience. Replicating this workshop on a regional basis would be costly due to the number of presenters involved and would be difficult to schedule, due to the same reason. However, the content should be of interest to a wide range of information professionals. Transforming the workshop into a distance education offering seems like a logical next step. A distance education offering would also give CNI experience with administering such programs.

**Audience:** Academic librarians, information technologists, and other professionals who wish to develop assessment programs of networks or networked information resources and services in their institutions.

**Modules:** In Phase 1, CNI would coordinate the development of three modules of instruction that would cover methods, techniques, and best practices that underpin all types of assessment initiatives:

- Matching assessment techniques to institutional needs
- Writing assessment objectives and selecting measures
- Implementing assessment measures
- Interpreting and presenting data
- Using assessment results for planning

In Phase 2, CNI would coordinate the development of 3-4 specialized topics, each of which would cover 1-3 modules of instruction. Participants could choose the module(s) that suited their particular interest. Topics could include:

- Assessing the use of electronic information resources
- Assessing the impact of networked teaching and learning
- Assessing quality of services
- Assessing cost of services

**Program Structure and Technical Environment:** The modules would incorporate a variety of methods such as self-paced modules on the web; introductory lectures on the web; group discussion times; ask the expert sessions; e-mail correspondence with participants. CNI would provide specific technical requirements for participants and would emphasize high-end technology, which might preclude some participants from using the modules from home environments.

**Course Credit:** CNI will not offer continuing education units or course credit initially but will explore the possibility of having the course certified for credit if the potential audience requests it.

**Advisory Committee:** Representative(s) from each sponsoring group; ARL and EDUCAUSE are invited to become sponsors.

**Registration Fee:** CNI would charge a registration fee for the workshop with the expectation of recovering costs of developing and delivering the modules over a two-year period. The fee could range from approximately \$200.-400. depending on how many modules an individual chose.

**Faculty:** Faculty would be recruited from projects and institutions that have worked with CNI on assessment.

