



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT CHAPEL HILL

7 April 2002

To: Greg Newby, Assistant Professor

From: Jane Greenberg, Assistant Professor *Jane G.*
David Carr, Associate Professor *David*

Re: Peer Observation, December 5, 2001 [INLS181: Internet Applications]

The observed session was devoted to web hosting for personal and professional (e.g., organizational, institutional) web sites. The class began with an overall introduction to web hosting. Specific attention was then given to regulations, economics, decision-making, and policies associated with web hosting. For example, legalities of domain-name registration and trademark laws were addressed as part of the "regulations" discussion, and outsourcing and quality issues were addressed as part of the "policies" discussion. The last component of the observed session included a review of the different types of services available.

You were well prepared for class and began instruction on time. You first devoted a few minutes to course logistics, asking students if there were questions or if they had any important news to share with the class. The syllabus was mounted on the web and used to review class goals and questions about the term project deliverables. While your use of web technology for this part of the class is good for documentary and reference purposes, coverage of these points might have been enhanced if a few questions had been directed toward the students to generate more involvement. You then moved to coverage of the session's topic of web hosting.

The presentation was easy to hear and follow. You stood in front of the class and a little to the far-left for most of the session in order to easily navigate the course webpage, although you moved around in the front of the class when you did not need to click on webpage links. Moving around presents a good style because your action offsets the passive atmosphere caused by dimmed lighting. Your hands and face gestures, as well as the web pointer were used to emphasize key points, although it was difficult to see your face at times due to dim lights. You might consider taking advantage of the wireless keyboard in room 307, which gives you greater mobility. This could be particularly useful when the lights are dimmed for longer periods. While the observers did not stay for the second half of the class, and cannot comment on the dimming of lights for the entire class, it is recommended that you do not keep the lights down for longer than a one-hour period and allow students to have more eye and face contact with you.

Your incorporation of web technology is excellent. The class webpage contained important links and clearly supported the observed session. Additional references provide a useful and important learning tool for further exploration of course topics outside the class. Several students were using laptops. You encouraged their use and these students were able to easily follow your

presentation. Students with out laptops (the majority of the class) were also able to easily follow the session because of the way you skillfully integrated the course webpage into the session.

The pace of the class and the discussion that took place indicated that the students were able to follow along and learn the new information as the session progressed. You are fairly flexible, although not so flexible that the session's message was not communicated. The students were attentive and engaged and a number of them asked questions or shared observations.

As a facilitator, you gave each student that wanted to participate a chance to do so. It was observed that some students comments required clarification and follow-up from you. You were aware of this and followed through on this part of the learning process. No single student seemed to dominate the class. Your use of storytelling, humor, and sharing of real world activities created a comfortable learning atmosphere. The arrangement of the seats with students in vertical rows, however, made it difficult for students to share comments and facilitate or participate dialog. Consider having students arrange their seats in a semi circle to allow for more conversational and shared-learning among peers.

You exhibit a relaxed and confident teaching style. You are clearly knowledgeable about the topic of web hosting and were able to impart your knowledge successfully and instruct students in a very positive manner. Your use of web technology is impressive, an excellent example and model for other SILS faculty.

In terms of suggestions, we recommend you consider the following:

- Break from the dim lights and the web at times to allow for a more student interaction during questioning periods and to give students more personable contact with you.
- Try to wireless keyboard and moving around the class a bit more, particularly when the lights are dim for web display.
- Experiment with student seating arrangement to allow for more shared-learning among peers.

The students are clearly comfortable with you and your teaching style and you have created an excellent learning environment. You are doing a fine job and we commend you in your efforts.