1. Background and Mandate

The Institute for Research on Learning Technologies (IRLT) has a broad mandate to engage in systematic inquiry, discussion, and information sharing related to the uses of technology in teaching and learning. Originally established in 1987 within the Faculty of Education as the Centre for the Study of Computers in Education (CSCE), the Institute became a university-based research unit in June 2001 and was re-named. IRLT encourages the formation of links with faculty members across the university and with schools, government, and industry to provide collaborative, multidisciplinary approaches to research problems and issues. More specifically, the goals of the Institute are as follows:

- To engage in research, study, and public discussion of issues related to the pedagogical uses of technology and to the moral, ethical, and educational implications of its use;

- To develop projects that make innovative uses of new technologies in teaching and learning;

- To maintain an active program to disseminate findings of its projects, its activities, and developments in the field to educators and other interested parties;

- To foster collaboration between academics, educators, and industry and government personnel on research and development problems and issues of mutual concern and interest.

During the 2005-06 academic year, IRLT members developed and approved a six year plan. We began with an ambitious vision: to strive to become, within six years, one of the premier university-based research institutes in North America focusing on the study of teaching and learning with technology. Eight strategic goals were adopted to help achieve this vision. These are listed below together with brief comments on achievements in each area.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGY</th>
<th>ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING 2006-07</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form Special Interest Groups (SIG) in Focus Areas</td>
<td>▪ One SIG entitled <em>Digital Culture and the Arts</em> was formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase Our External Profile</td>
<td>▪ Increased efforts made to identify faculty as IRLT members when publishing/speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ IRLT website was completely redesigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiate a Visiting Scholars Program</td>
<td>▪ One scholar agreed to visit during 2006-07 but cancelled out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence the Hiring Process</td>
<td>▪ Submissions made to AVP (Research) and to Graduate Programme in Psychology for a position in the Learning Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish an External Advisory Committee</td>
<td>▪ Established in spring 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restructure Executive Committee</td>
<td>▪ Coordinators of SIGs are members of the Executive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise Funding for Infrastructure</td>
<td>▪ Digital Futures Fund for faculty/staff donations is operating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ A submission was made to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. We received funding for a specific project (see Owston grants below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain Secure Support Services</td>
<td>▪ Funding agreement worked out with AVP (Research) for 1/3 clerical support person to be shared for 2007-2008 with the Faculty Support Centre.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2. Organizational Structure and Staffing**

**Personnel**

Because IRLT is a university-based research unit, the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) appoints a director who manages IRLT. The current and founding director is Professor Ron Owston (Education). York University provides release time and an administrative stipend according to the YUFA collective agreement. Professor Mary Leigh Morbey (Education) has been Associate Director since 2001 (except during her sabbatical in 2004-2005 when Professor Renate Wickens, Fine Arts, assumed her responsibilities).

IRLT employs Herb Wideman full time on annual contract as Senior Researcher, while Kathryn Cook (a faculty member at Georgian College) occasionally works part time as Research Assistant and is voluntary Web master. Typically, the Institute hires four to five students annually as Graduate Research Assistants on various research projects.

**Governance**

The Executive Committee is responsible for setting strategic priorities and policies for IRLT. Its membership consists of the following: the Director, Associate Director,
two Members-at-Large, SIG coordinator(s), and a Graduate Student. In 2006-07, Professor Suzanne Macdonald (Health), Richard Jarrell (Science & Engineering), and Christine Brown (Education graduate student) filled the latter three positions. Professor Morbey filled the Associate Director and the Digital Culture and the Arts SIG coordinator positions. The Members-at-Large and the graduate student members are approved annually by the membership; the others are ex-officio voting positions.

Our Advisory Board met two times during the 2006-2007 academic year. The terms of reference for the Board are as follows:

- To provide an external view of IRLT activities and outputs
- Advise on strategic directions and opportunities
- Raise the profile of IRLT with external communities.

The Board consists of three external members as well as the Executive Committee. The external members in 2006-07 were Marty Keast (Pearson Canada), Lynne Zucker (Sun Microsystems Canada) and Robert Martellacci (Mindshare Learning).

Publications

IRLT publishes a series of technical reports based on members’ research. These reports are made available to the research community at the Institute’s Web site. A listing of this past year’s reports is below in the Activities section.

3. Active Membership List

IRLT has members from all Faculties at York as well as Glendon College. Some IRLT members focus on learning technologies as their primary research interest with all of their publications and grant writing centering on this topic; others have it as a secondary or joint research interest and publish less regularly in this area; while still others are mainly interested in improving their teaching through the use of technology, receive teaching/project development grants, and/or write conference papers about their teaching with technology and more generally support IRLT’s goals. Membership is voluntary and members are not formally reviewed. York faculty membership for 2006-07 was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alison Griffith</td>
<td>Faculty of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ananya Mukherjee-Reed</td>
<td>Department of Political Science, Faculty of Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avi Cohen</td>
<td>Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Found</td>
<td>Faculty of Arts/Environmental Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caitlin Fisher</td>
<td>Department of Film, Faculty of Fine Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolyn Steele</td>
<td>Career Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalton Kehoe</td>
<td>Division of Social Science, Faculty of Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evelyne Corcos</td>
<td>Department of Psychology, Glendon College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francoise Mougeon</td>
<td>Department of French Studies, Glendon College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gareth Morgan</td>
<td>Schulich School of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graham Orpwood</td>
<td>Faculty of Education; York/Seneca Institute for Science, Mathematics, Technology, and Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are 42 York members in total excluding staff and graduate students; in addition, several Seneca College faculty are also affiliated with IRLT.
4. Member Activities

Listed below are selected (a full list would be too extensive) articles, chapters, and books of members, as well as conference papers, reports, awards, and technology development activities of members during 2006-2007.

Selected Articles, Chapters, Published Conference Proceedings, and Books (IRLT members indicated in bold, graduate students with *)


Adams, J., & Morgan, G. ‘Second generation’ e-learning: characteristics and design principles for supporting management soft-skills development.” International Journal on E-Learning, 6(2), 157-185.


**Selected Conference Papers/Talks/Invited Addresses**


**Other Selected Member Activities: Projects /Course Development/Grants/Awards/Media Appearances**

Adams, J. (2007). Received SSRHC Small Grant (York University) awarded for “Blended Learning” – analysis of data gathered in a soft skills development project integrating classroom and e-learning modalities in an undergraduate business course.


Cook, K. (2006-2007). Developed course Web site for a new general education course at Georgian called *Understanding the Web* (http://webdesign2.georgianc.on.ca/~kcook/web). She re-made the IRLT Web site so that it is now standards compliant XHTML and accessible to persons with disabilities; the new design was based on log file analysis of users most requested pages and file downloads over the previous year. Additonally, she wrote three articles for EBSCO Publication Services: 1) *Out of School Time Programs*; 2) *Computers in the Classroom*; and 3) *Anchored Instruction*.

Corcos, E. (2007). Received Social Sciences and Research Council – Image, Text, Sound and Technology Grant ($50,000) – A web-based Social Skill Intervention program.

Fisher, C. (2006-07). Received (with colleagues) a CFI/OIT grant of slightly less than $1.0 million for the establishment of the Future Cinema lab. She also received a SSHRC standard grant for a research project into Augmented Reality Storyworlds and I was also a successful co-applicant to the standard grant program to look at methods and possibilities for digital archiving and recreation of early immersive film experiments of Expo '67.


Hornstein, S. Received the Walter L. Gordon Fellowship for 2007-08.

Jenson, J. (2006). Co-founded the Canadian Educational Games Association and is co-editor of its journal called *Loading*...

Lotherington, H. Appeared on Rogers OMNI television: *Agenda* (2006, April 19@8am, 9am; 20@10am, 11am; 22@8am, 9am). Interview: *Digital literacies*, with host Paul Cook (6.5 minutes). Rogers, channel 10; 63. Meetu Khosla, Chase producer.

Lotherington, H. Appeared on TV Ontario: *Big Ideas* (2006, March 18@1pm; 19@1pm; 20@2am). Featured lecture: Lotherington, H. *The evolution of digital literacies*, hosted by Andrew Moodie (one hour of two hour program). TVO, channel 2. Matt Faulknor, Producer.

http://www.tvo.org/TVOsites/WebObjects/TvoMicrosite.woa?bigideas

Murphy, J. (June 2007) Award winner at ORION Summit, Learning Award of Merit for Learning Connections Project.


Murphy, J. Global Classroom CIDA funded project ($177,000) – Orange Revolution.

Murphy, J. Canadian Centres for Learning project ($49,237) - ADHD teacher training with Hospital for Sick Children CHEO project ($150,000) – ADHD project with Bluewater DSB and Hospital for Sick Children.

Murphy, J. (2007). Co-applicant applicant in a SSHRC funded project Canadian Business Ethics Research Network (CBERN), $2.1 million over 7 years.

Morbev, M. L. Invited Guest Researcher, Ugandan National Museum (Kampala), to collaborate on the conceptualization and development of its new museum website, 2006-present.

Morbev, M. L. (2007). Received York Seminar on Advanced Research (YSAR) grant for $7500 to establish a seminar series called *Digital Dimensions: The Arts and Virtual Culture*.


Owston, R. D. (2007). Was awarded the title of University Professor at York University’s June Convocation for his “extraordinary contribution to the University as a colleague, teacher, and scholar.”

Owston, R. D. (2007). Was co-applicant in a $3.1 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for the Flexible Users Interface Design (Fluid) Project in partnership with University of Toronto, University of British Columbia, Cambridge University, and University of California at Berkeley.


**IRLT Technical Reports (available at website)**


**IRLT Speaker Series**

To fulfill its mandate of public dialogue and dissemination of research, IRLT sponsors a speaker series each year. In 2006-07, the events below were held.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>SPEAKER</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 2006</td>
<td>Stephen Chen, York University</td>
<td>Gesture Friendly Interfaces and Tools to Help Teachers Teach with Gesture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2006</td>
<td>Lynn Johnson, University of Michigan</td>
<td>Podcasting in University Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2007</td>
<td>Karen Andrews and Ros Woodhouse, York University</td>
<td>Using Technology to Enhance the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning: A Case Study of an Introductory Sociology Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2007</td>
<td>Sam Lanfranco, York University</td>
<td>Here Comes the Curricular Wikis: Riding or Surviving the Wiki Tsunami</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5. Measures taken to Promote Equity**

IRLT has a very diverse membership in terms of gender and field of specialization: 60% of its members are female which far exceeds the University’s female representation on faculty; and the membership list above illustrates the variety of fields of specialization from which IRLT draws its members. Also, all three graduate students formally employed by IRLT were female. There are no barriers to membership because the only requirement for membership is an interest in teaching and learning with technology.
6. Statement of Operations – see appendix

7. Budget for Current Year – see appendix

8. Student Activities/Accomplishments

In Section 4 above students who co-authored papers with IRLT members are indicated with an asterisk. Below additional activities/accomplishments of students during 2006-2007 are listed:

- **Christine Brown (PhD programme in Education):**
  - Worked with Ron Owston on his Canadian Council on Learning grant on educational games
  - SAGE student conference – organizer for 4 online national conferences
  - Developed a hybrid course for Ryerson University, Destination Management Systems, Fall 2006.

- **Sarah Chu (MEd programme):** worked for Ron Owston on the development of the Virtual Usability Lab software (http://wvulab.ca) sponsored by the SSHRC grant on the Simulation and Advanced Gaming Environments (SAGE) for Learning project

- **Natalia Sinitskaya (PhD in Education programme):** worked with Ron Owston, Heather Lotherington, Margaret Sinclair, and Razika Sanaoui on the evaluation of the Learning Connections project; and did field research on a Canadian Council on Learning grant on educational games with Ron Owston.

- **Nick Taylor (PhD programme in Education):** worked for Jennifer Jenson on the Simulation and Advanced Gaming Environments (SAGE) for Learning project.

In addition, the **ABEL Program** employed:

- Dorota Pirzanska – 2nd year student as communication and marketing assistant.
- Jananeh Asari – computer science student as lead programmer.
- Two graduate students – Nicole Da Costa – videographer and Miriam Di Pasquale – communications and marketing assistant.
9. Changes in Physical Space
No changes in space occurred during 2006-07.

10. Contractual Obligations
No contractual obligations were made during 2006-07.