Distance Learning @ The NRC

What is Distance Learning?

Distance learning in its simplest form is learning that occurs when the participants are not always present in the same location. The concept of learning from a distance is not a new approach to learning but is one the NRC has only recently begun to leverage. Traditionally in-person training has been the NRC's go-to solution for training. There are a number of computer-based courses currently available, but these are short-duration specific topical courses usually required by regulation or law. There also has been recent success in the implementation of a blended learning solution for a multi-day technical heath physics course using a collection of self-paced online activities inside the NRC's Collaborative Learning Environment and live on line virtual training sessions.

Distance Learning Pilot Project Goal

Provide a cost efficient solution to the challenge of continuing to deliver the NRC's high quality of instruction to an audience that is geographically separated from presenter due to reduced travel opportunities for training. Implementing the distance learning pilot provides the opportunity to conduct multi-day technical training via a live on line broadcast with learners geographically separated from each other and the instructor.

Technical Training Center Distance Learning Pilot

To meet the challenge of reduced travel opportunities for training, the TTC will be piloting the July 2016 Westinghouse Pressurized Water Reactor series course using a distance learning strategy. The Westinghouse Technology (R-304P, 3 weeks), and Westinghouse Advanced Technology (R-504P, 2 weeks) will be conducted live with approximately half the students attending in person and the remaining students attending from their individual work or home office. The students will then attend the Westinghouse Simulator (R-624P, 2 weeks) portion at the TTC for hands on application of their knowledge.

The classroom has been modified to support the ability of instructors to provide 2-way communication with students attending remotely. The course instructors will be using the Go-To-Training (GTT) software solution which is part of the NRC's Citrix Go-To-Meeting platform implementation. A small group of highly experienced instructors will be rotated as the topic facilitators for both the R304P and R504P courses. The instructors will be supported by producers that will provide live support to the on line students during the course. The class size will be limited to the normal course size of 24 students to ensure sufficient availability for the students to attend the follow-on simulator session and to ensure a manageable class size for the pilot.

Prior to going live on July 25th, the plan is to provide the opportunity to practice in mock live sessions. The students attending will be attending learning sessions prior to the July 25th kickoff, on the use of the GTT platform.

Summary

Using a distance learning approach provides an efficient learning solution and potentially expands the delivery options for NRC learning. At the conclusion of the pilot in early September a review of the successes and challenges will be conducted. These results will be used to inform the decision to expand the capability or explore alternate solutions for distance learning.