Academic Literacy for All is a cooperative program between the University of New Mexico’s College of Education, the Albuquerque Public Schools, and the Los Lunas Schools funded by the US Department of Education. Faculty from the Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies Department will work with teachers from four high schools and 7 middle schools. The program goal is to help teachers understand how to facilitate the language and literacy development of their English Language Learners at the same time that they are learning course content. A major component of the program will be a website designed to support these professional development activities for the teachers. This proposed paper will describe the program’s web based activities. The site will feature document depositories, discussion forums and links to expert advice. The site will make use of Apple’s iTunesU as a vehicle for distributing classroom videos of instructional strategies and activities. The website will be collaboratively designed by the program participants. The goal is use the web to support a community of learners in the development of their professional practices.

The proposed brief paper will describe the design of the website and the rationale behind the design. The website is meant to support the community of participating teachers as they develop their professional practice. The participating teachers form a community of practice around the goal of developing second language literacy. As best practices and models are developed in seminars and summer institutes, they will be documented and made available through the website. Teachers will model classroom practices that will be videotaped. The video will then be edited and used for study and comment by the participating teachers. Exemplary videos will be uploaded to the website and made available to both the participating teachers and to teachers-in training at the College of Education. Usage of the website will be tracked and the results included in the project’s evaluation reports.

In addition to the repository of best practices, the website will also facilitate group discussions through the use of forums and web logs (blogs). We also intend to experiment with using wiki’s as a way to develop a group consensus about practices and rationales. These parts of the website will model the use of new web-based applications as tools for teaching and learning.
Finally, the website plans on using Apple’s iTunesU as a vehicle for distributing videos and audio files. This saves on hard disk space and bandwidth usage for the project, and provides a convenient and simple format for sharing and distributing media files.

The website will begin design and development in the fall of 2007 and be fully operational for the fall of 2008.