As international culture and commerce become increasingly reliant on visual communications, visual literacy has developed into an essential skill for high school and college graduates, their instructors and supporting staff. With advancements in technology and the digitizing of information, digital literacy has also rapidly grown in importance. Digital Visual Literacy (DVL) has become the ability to critically analyze digital visual materials, create effective visual communications, and make judgments and decisions using visual representations of thoughts and ideas. These skills actively engage our cognitive processing of visual images and have evolved from concepts at the intersection of a range of established disciplines. This roundtable will discuss this important integration of visual media and technology, its use in computer literacy courses and in courses from other disciplines where computer literacy is required, and the range of professional development required to make it all happen.

Twelve pioneering instructional modules with supporting materials were developed and tested during this three year National Science Foundation Advanced Technological Education (NSF ATE) grant. Project methodology involved a partnership between university researchers, who provided much of the content, and community colleges who incorporated this content into instructional modules that could be embedded in basic computer literacy courses. During this process, the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) was used to develop the DVL instructional materials. In addition, an instructional design matrix was used to align objectives, content information, examples, practice activities, and assessment. The merits and deliverables of this process will be discussed during the roundtable.


The next phase of the project involved testing the twelve modules in college courses. Evaluation data was collected from students and faculty about the instructional material used and the impact of DVL. Faculty and students were interviewed. Pre-test and post-test activities were also used to measure prior knowledge and post knowledge. Once this data was collected and analyzed, final adjustments were made to the modules. The last phase of the grant, now underway, is the dissemination of the DVL materials and research findings. Instructors, staff, and administrators from high school CTE programs, community colleges, and universities are participating in this phase – and their feedback (especially on DVL professional development activities) is also being collected. These findings will be shared during the discussion and participants will be invited to collaborate on ideas how DVL might be adapted to their diverse environments.
A laptop computer will be used during the roundtable to help participants explore the interdisciplinary nature of Digital Visual Literacy and to experience a number of DVL workshop activities. With a brief discussion of DVL using key components of the introductory module (through PowerPoint slides), participants will be able to brainstorm potential DVL applications in courses from different disciplines. This dialog will be used to introduce the twelve DVL modules and to demonstrate a game illustrating important DVL concepts and skills. The DVL team will share printed copies of the instructional materials available, along with the insights gained from the development and testing phases of the project. All participants will receive the color DVL brochure, which has further details about the project, modules, and the procedures to access the DVL wiki (http://dvl.mc.maricopa.edu/); for those interested, the laptop can also be used for an interactive tour of the DVL website. Participants will gain a much better appreciation of Digital Visual Literacy concepts, its interdisciplinary nature and potential applications, research findings, and the wide range of valuable instructional resources now freely available.