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Air Force M&S Education and Training Program

As modeling and simulation (M&S) applications multiply and spread to new user domains, the demands on leaders, managers and users for integration of both technical and operational issues become increasingly complex. Educating these new users in efficient ways to manage the applications thus becomes a major challenge.

IST is supporting the Department of Defense and USAF's interest in exploring innovative approaches to educating the DoD work force on cost-effective applications for distributed modeling and simulations. This is being accomplished using state-of-the-art training technology, and collaborative/distributed learning environments (*i.e.* the Internet). The goal of this effort is to teach USAF personnel how to apply and manage M&S applications and how to identify cost-effective ways to spread their use over other domains.

IST laid the foundations for high-tech distributed education in its work with the Army's DIS Educational program, the DIS User Manager Shortcourse, the M&S Functional Course and the DoD Staff Officer Course. With these and our efforts in training and information technology research and technical services, the design of a program for the USAF that would include development of workshops and training support materials and the electronic distribution of tutorial packages was a logical extension. The resulting package integrates the various presen-

tations and other relevant materials, into a total distributed learning system.

The long-term aim of this program is to establish a three-phase curriculum that includes: (1) resident workshops for those with immediate need for either an overall awareness of M&S or in-depth knowledge of staff skills required to manage/use M&S programs and applications. (2) formally integrated training package support to Air Force educational programs, such as War College, Squadron Officer training. (3) distributed, Internet-based learning support as a follow-up to attendance at one of the resident courses or as a substitute, "just-in-time" alternative.

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Mission: ■ Be a focal point for the expanding modeling and simulation community ■ Develop and conduct M&S research and related services ■ Identify M&S directions and trends ■ Facilitate moving M&S into new areas ■ Be a research and development access point to industry for technology transfer ■ Create and participate in partnerships ■ Provide an environment conducive for student and faculty participation in M&S research and development ■ Provide continuing education services.