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CCNMTL'S VIDEO ANALYSIS APPLICATION "VITAL" OPEN SOURCED

New York – June 22, 2009. The Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning (CCNMTL) is pleased to announce that Video Interactions for Teaching and Learning (VITAL), a web-based learning environment for video analysis and multimedia essay writing, was released today to the public under an open source license.

VITAL features tools that enable students to edit, annotate, and store clips that they select from a video library. Students then use these clips as multimedia citations in essays that are published within the VITAL environment for review and critique by the professor and classmates. In the essays, students establish a meaningful context for the cited videos, similar to they way they cite books or journal articles.

"VITAL mobilizes the power of digital technologies to provide students and faculty not only with access to the primary video sources, but to an online work environment that permits study, analysis, and student knowledge production," said Frank Moretti, CCNMTL executive director.

The development of VITAL began in 2002 in collaboration with Columbia University Teachers College Professor Herbert Ginsburg. Since 2004, it has been supported by a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant, which will end later this year. CCNMTL has chosen to release VITAL as an open source project to invite developers to join in advancing what has been a very successful educational tool at Columbia University and to encourage other universities to adopt and use VITAL.

"Disseminating the software has always been a goal of the project and we think releasing VITAL as open source gives it the best chance for wider adoption and possible integration into other course-based systems," added Michael Preston, VITAL project manager since 2005.

The Java-based iteration of the VITAL codebase was released under the Educational Community License, Version 2.0. A VITAL project page has been created in the Google code repository that provides details for using and participating in the project. This repository will be managed by the current VITAL developers including Eddie Rubeiz and Schuyler Duveen and features code from earlier developers Eric Mattes and Gordon Campbell.

About the Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning (CCNMTL)

The Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning was founded at Columbia University in 1999 to enhance teaching and learning through the purposeful use of new media. In partnership with faculty, the Center supports efforts ranging from basic course website management to advanced project development. CCNMTL also extends the scope and reach of its work with strategic initiatives that engage educators, researchers, librarians, partner institutions, and the community in the reinvention of education for the digital age. For more information, please visit http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu.

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