

# ADETA

Alberta Distance Education & Training Association

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## The Many 'Faces' of Distance Education



by Gail Crawford

The language and terminology of distance education can be quite confusing. In addition to different meanings for the same terms, new terms continue to arise and evolve. One recurrent issue found in distance education is the issue of whether to refer to 'education' or 'learning.' This issue is unresolved and you will encounter both terms 'distance education' and 'distance learning.' The latter appears to be the preferred term when 'student-centredness' is to be emphasized; however, the terms may also be used as synonyms.

Throughout the field you may encounter a variety of related and associated terms. Among the more common such terms are:

- correspondence education,
- open learning,
- adult education,
- learner-centred education,
- independent study,
- external studies,
- continuing education,
- technology-based education,
- online learning,
- and distributed education.

### Correspondence Education

Correspondence education is the original name for what we now designate 'distance education.' For the most part, it applies to forms of education in which the communication between students and teachers or institutions occurs through the written word and postal services; thus, communication in correspondence education may be relatively slow and infrequent. Some contemporary institutions are essentially correspondence institutions because they use these basic communications systems, while others still use the written word and the postal system but focus on two-way communications by also using telephones and computers.

### Open Learning

The term 'open learning' is most closely associated with the develop-

ment of distance education in Britain. The OUUK opted to use the term 'Open University' at its inception, and the evolution of open learning appears to be associated with it in a variety of ways. The term is used less frequently in North American distance education, but it is still one that you will encounter from time to time, for example, in reference to the Open Learning Agency in British Columbia (OLA).

Continued on page 11

## In This Issue

<b>The Many 'Faces' of Distance Education by Gail Crawford</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>President's Message</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>What's Happening</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Inventing the Box: What's Going to Happen ! by Andy Asselin</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Musing of a Corporate Guru by Ramona Materi</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Announcements</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Conferences &amp; Workshops</b>	<b>16</b>

**Collaboration and Excellence in Distance Education and Training**

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# President's Message



As you might recall your ADETA board met in the fall to do some strategic planning. Part of this review was to examine our purpose—who we are and what are we here to do. Other considerations were, what do we value, what is our vision, do we have an image of our desired future and how will we get there. All these are important aspects of strategic planning. However, one of our first goals was to revisit and examine the meaning of the term distance education. We want our ADETA members input and what we think is critical components to incorporate into this definition.

We begin this discussion with an article *The Many 'Faces' of Distance Education* by Gail Crawford, Ph.D., (Instructional Psychologist, Centre for Distance Education/Master of Distance Education Program at Athabasca University) to provide a basis for some reflective thinking. We will then post a few definitions on the ADETA-net to start our discussion with membership participants. We can exchange our ideas and thoughts in an attempt to come up with a definition that would represent what ADETA members value and think represent our association. This dis-

ussion will be moderated by Ingrid Stammer and Stephen Walker, both members of the board. We will then bring the final discussion forward at the Interface Conference to help us finalize what we think is a good definition that represents ADETA membership. We look forward to a lively discussion and participation from the members.

On behalf of the board I would like to extend a warm welcome to all our new members who have joined ADETA. We look forward to getting to know you. Here are some of our new members who sent me a brief hello.

My name is John Howie ([howiej@rvvs.com](mailto:howiej@rvvs.com)). I am currently the Distance Education Program Co-ordinator with the Airdrie Alternative school, and a virtual school teacher with the Rocky View Virtual School. I've also been a corporate trainer for a variety of companies. So far, I've enjoyed the information that I have received from ADETA, and I look forward to being involved with this organization.

My name is Diane Skene ([diane.skene@sait.ab.ca](mailto:diane.skene@sait.ab.ca)). I attended the conference last year and was very impressed with the calibre of presenters and the variety of sessions. I am a contract instructor at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology where I facilitate learning in the area of written and oral communication. I work with on-site, e-learning and distance learners mainly in the area of technical writing, and interpersonal communication skills. I primarily work with health care professionals as well as computer technicians.

My name is Maria Cicman ([maria.cicman@rdc.ab.ca](mailto:maria.cicman@rdc.ab.ca)). I am a new member to ADETA but have been

around ADETA for several years (having worked previously at Northern Lakes College). I presently work at Red Deer College as the co-ordinator of the Alternate Delivery Teacher Assistant Program. I look forward to being a part of ADETA.

My name is Robert Aucoin ([robert.aucoin@ualberta.ca](mailto:robert.aucoin@ualberta.ca)). I am new to ADETA, new to Edmonton and new to Alberta. Since August I have been the distance education co-ordinator in Academic Technologies for Learning at the University of Alberta. Prior to that I was the Instructional Technology Co-ordinator for the Faculty of Health Professions at Dalhousie University and prior to that I was the Educational Technologist for Glendon College of York University. At Dalhousie we were focussing mostly on Internet-based applications of distance education whereas at York we were focussing on video-conferencing. At U of A we are trying to do it all. My formal training is as a math teacher (I taught for 3 years in Zimbabwe and 3 years at a CEGEP in Montreal) and I also have an MA in Educational Technology from Concordia University in Montreal. I look forward to more communications with ADETA members.

My name is Sheila Donaldson ([sheila.donaldson@sait.ab.ca](mailto:sheila.donaldson@sait.ab.ca)) and I work at Southern Alberta Institute of Technology as TLM Support. (Many of us will know Sheila from over the years.)

Hello my name is Edie Stelkovic ([estelkovic@admin.oldscollege.ab.ca](mailto:estelkovic@admin.oldscollege.ab.ca)). I am Program Coordinator of Land Sciences Extension Programs. Diploma in Horticulture, employed by Olds College for the past four years. We deliver industry training

Continued on page 9

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# What's Happening...

## Red Deer College

### Alternate Delivery

Here it is the beginning of a term and all the classes in the Alternate TA Program are up and running. The Teacher Assistant Program has over 20 years of experience delivering its program within Alberta. Many of its initial projects were demographically specific but it is at the point of reaching beyond specific boundaries. A blend of technologies including Learnline, teleconferencing, WebCT, and print-based material has been widely received and we are presently supporting learners across Alberta, British Columbia, and the North West Territories.

Although DE is not necessarily the easiest to administrate nor does it usually have the success rates equivalent to most on-site classes we have not found this to be the case with the Alternate Teacher Assistant Program. Our off-site graduation rates rival if not exceed our on-site program. Our success can be attributed to the support offered to students, individualized student attention, access to college resources, and a strong commitment from our instructors. In addition, the student body in our alternate delivery program is made up largely of mature students with a strong commitment to the mode of delivery.

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**TEACHER ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

## University of Alberta

### On-line New Media Diploma in Visual Design (NMD)

In November 2000, the NMD Academic coordinator, Ana Herrera, and Academic Technologies for Learning formed a partnership to convert the current face-to-face new media diploma to online courses for visual designers and web professionals.

"The challenge with this kind of project is to convey information that is usually presented to students in a workshop or lab environment. Also, the large amount of graphics required and the use of cutting-edge technology impose a challenge for the conversion. Broadband technologies are a possible solution but they are still not available to the general public so alternative options need to be implemented." With the help of ATL's staff and the content expertise of instructors and the NMD academic coordinator, the first converted course is scheduled to be on-line in September-October 2001.

<http://www.extension.ualberta.ca/newmedia/>

### The University of Alberta School of Business

"The Centre for Executive and Management Development at the School of Business is in the process of updating the delivery of its successful Corporate Finance Diploma (CFD). The CFD has been developed in partnership with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Alberta and the Certified Management Accountants of Alberta, for professional accountants from all business and industry sectors, and other professionals from the corporate finance sector who wish to expand their knowledge and skills in corporate finance. The CFD

is comprised of six MBA level courses and is offered through a system of distributed learning. This includes print, video conferencing, web-based course resources, and computer-mediated conferencing."  
<http://www.finance-diploma.net/>

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## University of Alberta



### ADETA-Net

ADETA-Net is a free service for ADETA members providing the opportunity to electronically dialogue and share information with other distance educators and trainers.

The quality and quantity of messages posted depend on the interest and care of the list members. ADETA-Net is unmoderated, in that all members are free to post queries or items of interest and concern. This is done by addressing electronic mail to ADETA-Net@SAIT.AB.CA The list will automatically forward these messages to all registered members.

Registration in the list is restricted to ADETA members thus it is necessary to have your membership in the list approved by the list owner. If you are an ADETA member, and wish to join the list, send an e-mail message to:

Susan Kerr  
Susan.Kerr@norquest.ab.ca

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# What's Happening...

## Athabasca University

**Growth:** Registrations continue to grow in the double digits. A record number of students graduated in December. The Edmonton Learning Centre expanded this fall and a new building was acquired in Athabasca.

**Journal:** Second issue of AU's journal is now available - Vol. 1, No. 2 of the International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning (IRRODL) is now available at: <http://www.irrodl.org/current.html>

### New Graduate Programs

Masters in Counselling (<http://www.ABCounsellorEd.net>) the Ministry of Learning announced that ACCESS funding has been awarded to the Campus Alberta Counselor Education Initiative. This initiative will create a graduate program in counselling, jointly sponsored and operated by the Division of Applied Psychology at the University of Calgary, the Psychology Centre of Athabasca University, and the Faculty of Education at the University of Lethbridge.

### Masters of Science in Information Systems

September 2001 brings the opening of the Master of Science in Information Systems. The degree is being introduced to meet extremely high demand from both Information Technology professionals and employers, and is was the first of its kind to be made available fully online, delivered and supported using a variety of Web-based technologies.

<http://ccism.pc.athabascau.ca/graduate/mscwebpages/mainandindex.htm>

**New Partnerships:** Athabasca University's most recent international partnerships agreements have been with the University of Monterrey (Mexico), Trinidad and Tobago, Belgrano University (Argentina), and University of the Arctic. Within the University of the Arctic partnership of universities, AU is responsible for managing the development of the Arctic Learning Environment (ALE).

**New Face (Well, familiar face in a new place):** AU will receive \$1 million over the next five years from the new Canada Research Chairs Program to establish two chairs to examine theories and practice in distance and online learning. The first appointment, Dr. Terry Anderson, comes to Athabasca University from the Academic Technology Unit at the University of Alberta. Anderson will review current methods in distance and online learning and investigate ways to improve professor-student interaction, student-student interaction, and professor and student-content interaction.

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Athabasca University   
Canada's  Open University

Check out the Telus  
Learning Connection  
Web site at  
<http://www.2learn.ca/>

## Mount Royal College

### Are you seeking support for online learning or teaching?

Mount Royal College has created an online resource, the Virtual Centre for Online Learning & Teaching (VCOLT), to support and enhance the use or development of educational technologies and online forums.

VCOLT provides information to support students, instructors, content experts, or web-based development and instructional design practitioners in the following ways:

- Provides web links, technical guidelines, and instructions as well as study tips for students using the Web for learning
- Offers web teaching resources for designing, developing, and delivering web-based instruction, including online tutorials, journals, and academic papers
- Includes links to educational technology workshops or conferences
- Includes links to online discussion forums and listservs that examine issues, trends, and changes related to teaching, learning, and technology in post-secondary education.

You can visit VCOLT at the following Web site address: <http://www.mtroyal.ab.ca/adc/teachingonline>

Patty Moore  
[pmoore@mtroyal.ab.ca](mailto:pmoore@mtroyal.ab.ca)  
<http://www.mtroyal.ab.ca>



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# What's Happening...

## Mount Royal College

### From the Advanced Studies in Mental Health Program

The Advanced Studies in Mental Health Program at Mount Royal College has been in existence for the past 21 years and has been delivered at a distance for 16 of those 21 years. In fall 2001, the program will have a new look with a more focused and streamlined model targeting professionals who hold a degree or diploma in a health related field and who have an interest in, or are already working in mental health settings. The new program model contains four required core courses. Following that, students select an area of focus and complete a theory course and a practicum course in the focus area. Multimodal instructional approaches continue to be used to connect students across the country with each other and as we see increasing numbers of students with access to technology, more of the courses are moving to online delivery. For more information contact the Fran Quick at [fquick@mtroyal.ab.ca](mailto:fquick@mtroyal.ab.ca)

In January 2001, Sharon Moore and Fae Jackson from the ASMH Program presented at an International Conference on Distance Learning Research in Austin, Texas sponsored by the Texas A & M and the Centre for Distance Learning Research. This was an exciting conference to attend as we were able to network with distance educators from across the United States, Brazil, Spain, and other parts of Canada.

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## Norquest College

Interest in our synchronous distance delivery of high school courses continues to grow. The second term got underway in February with 12 courses delivered via the web-based Learning Server. We are offering Math 30 Pure, Math 33, Social Studies 10 and 20, Science 10, Financial Management, and Chemistry, Biology, and Physics at the 20 and 30 levels. Two hundred students are enrolled in these courses at ten sites in north-central Alberta.

Two years ago we began offering our Practical Nurse program as a print-based distance delivery program. Students work at their own pace on the course work and have two years to complete the program. Clinical practice is arranged for students in their local communities or in Edmonton depending on student numbers and the availability of appropriate clinical facilities in the community. Two hundred students are currently registered in the program. The major-

ity of the students are from Alberta; however, we do have some from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and the Northwest Territories.

Development of a practical nurse review web site using WebCT is underway. Students will soon be able to log in and work through review material for each course. A review of the key concepts for each module will be provided, including video and audio clips, glossary items, and self-tests.

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# What's Happening...

## Grant MacEwan Community College

A critical part of the integration of online learning technologies into education is faculty participation. At Grant MacEwan College, the 2000/2001 school year is showing an increase in the number of faculty who are exploring and integrating online learning technologies into their classroom and distance teaching practice. Since last year, for WebCT users alone, the number of faculty has increased from around 20 users to over 100. Increased support for faculty interested in online learning technologies through the department of Instructional Media and Design, the Faculty Development office, and the Learn Online project has contributed to the increased use of online learning technologies across the college, although busy schedules and limited time is still a barrier for many faculty.

The increased support for both faculty and students is largely through several collaborative projects to address the need for faculty and student support above and beyond ongoing online course development.

### Faculty Support for Online Teaching

In the first project, a special website is being designed to support instructors who are interested in publishing courses on the Internet. This site will provide general information about Internet course delivery, and describe the resources and procedures for online course development at the college.

The site will cover topics such as the rationale for Web-based instruction, course content development, implementation factors, available technology, instructor support, student sup-

port, course marketing, and course evaluation. Links to existing sources within, as well as external to the college, will also be provided. The project is funded through the Learning Enhancement Envelope, in collaboration with NAIT. The site should be completed by June 2001.

A second, upcoming project will build upon the instructional resources developed in the previously described project. Funded by the Office of Learning Technologies and the Health and Community Studies Division, this project is sponsored by the Learn Online team at MacEwan in partnership with the Alberta Online Consortium, ACIFA, and St. Gabriel Cyber School. The proposed study will assess a professional development model for online instructors that is integrated into a collaborative online course development process. The project's focus is to implement and assess a professional development model that provides or facilitates access to timely, accessible, and relevant professional development activities and resources for faculty developing online courses. Project planners hope this project will contribute to the creation of a virtual community of online teaching practice at the college and will make more efficient use of existing professional development opportunities.

### Student Support for Online Learning

The first initiative, funded through the Learning Enhancement Envelope, in partnership with Norquest College and NAIT, is developing a website to orient students to an online learning environment. The site will focus on the whole online learning experience

with sections on software and hardware computer requirements for online learning, needed computer skills, how to use a browser for students with little or no computer experience, how to use WebCT, and learning skills needed for online learning. The site will move MacEwan closer to the goal of providing streamlined online services for students.

The site content is modularized, following the Learning Outcome Guide used at NAIT to organize content into competency-based learning objectives and activities. Each institution will then tailor the basic content to meet their students' needs. This site will be available by June 2001 at the Learn Online site at <http://learn.gmcc.ab.ca>.

The second initiative is focused on implementing and assessing a combination delivery mode to better serve rural students. This project, funded by the Office of Learning Technologies and the Health and Community Studies Division, is sponsored by the Palliative Care program in partnership with the East Central Health region. The project will provide needed professional palliative care staff development to the large rural health region. The project will assess staff development needs, develop and deliver a short course on grief and bereavement support skills, and assess the delivery using a combination of video-conferencing, face-to-face seminar, Web bulletin board, and print-based course packages. Project coordinators hope this pilot course will lead to more accessible and timely training opportunities for health providers within the region.

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<http://learn.gmcc.ab.ca>

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# What's Happening...

## SAIT

### SAIT to Launch Planning Virtual Space Forums

The recent on-campus history of the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology could be summarized in a two-word composite: planning-construction. However, just as the construction is due to be completed this summer, so our planning is showing signs of being converted into action.

Beginning in February and continuing until June, SAIT will be involved in an interesting enterprise, a series of forums and a symposium on people designing and developing curriculum that relies on technology and distance delivery for effective implementation. We're calling it *Planning Virtual Space: Forums and Symposium, 2001*. Currently, SAIT's Centre for Learning Department is handling the logistical process and recruiting presenters, participants and volunteers for these forums.

The first forum will be held February 20, 2001 and will deal with the **people** component: the needs, issues and support of SAIT's learners, faculty, staff, partners, and clients. An online function will continue until February 26<sup>th</sup>.

The second forum will be held live on March 7<sup>th</sup> and continue online until the 13<sup>th</sup>. It will concentrate on **content**: the learning processes and materials and how they are accommodated by virtual space

The third forum, on April 9<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>, will deal with **technology**: the infrastructure, media, and support and services needed to achieve and maintain the delivery of these initiatives.

Parallel to our self-examination on these fronts, there will be a survey and benchmarking process to analyze SAIT's **Net readiness**. Cisco Systems will scrutinize our computer network and devices to determine if we are up to speed.

Once we've had these discussions among ourselves, the information from the forums and the survey will be compiled in a white paper on Planning SAIT's Virtual Space. In June we will be inviting people-experts in the field from Calgary, from Alberta, from Canada, and from abroad to scrutinize every idea and suggestion in the white paper to help us formulate recommendations to management council for a strong SAIT commitment to virtual space.

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ADETA Website at  
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# Inventing the Box: What's Going to Happen!



by **Andy Asselin**

Look at this mess. I take a brief hiatus from the ADETA newsletter and the entire technology sector takes a dive. That's the challenge of being a spiritual cybentity who needs an occasional snooze. Well, yours truly, Senior Instructor of Northern Lakes College (NLC) Distance Learning High School (DLHS) is back and will present the usual unusual selections of musings for your reading pleasure. If something from this article stirs your interest, send me an email at "andy@iloveapple," I appreciate your feedback.

## **And Now for Something Completely Different**

Instead of going on with some pragmatic or esoteric conceptualizations, here is something different, an appetizer of ideas, just pointers that I have found interesting along my recent journey that I would like to share with you.

## **IT Is Happening.**

I, and many others, have previously discussed how the media message is changing at a rapid pace. A good portion of our modern media now requires an encoder/decoder, a player to make the media relevant to the hu-

man(e) experience. Today our modern media, players, and messages change at breakneck speeds reducing their capacity for cultural penetration and acceptance. It's a new media/message/player every 18/12/6 months.

With a plethora of messages coming on different media and players, how do we manage it all? We don't, at least not very well with the skills and tools we have now. A phenomenon is happening, I coin it "media fatigue," but it has many names, "get a life," "desk rage," "technological backlash," "dotcom exodus." They all point to the same process. All this technology was supposed to service us and give us incredible leisure time. How much time now do we spend serving it? Ironically, for some of us, it has become our leisure time. It is a happening challenge racing on each day. Remember the good old months, when hyperlinks were less than a line long?

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/et/ac=002683417558125&rtmo=fsMfvqDs&atmo=llllljx&pg=/et/01/1/25/ecfrage25.html>

## **Will IT Happen?**

This rapid pace of interesting times is challenging us to adapt and quickly! We are on a roller coaster ride and we are looking for new and old strategies and asking for help.

<http://www.it.fairfax.com.au/recruitment/20010115/A13706-2001Jan15.html>

This article points to the lack of "soul" for distance education. If this is not a plea for help, I don't know what is. Do we answer this plea for

relevancy? For all our media messages playing to be relevant to us there is a need for the human(e) element. The interface transcends any barrier presented by the technology and we have the gift of the Interface. It is a powerful gift, and for those who remember spider(eye) man: with great power comes great responsibility. As long as we choose to use this gift wisely, it will always be accessible. It will happen.

## **Making IT happen!**

As we continue down this road we are making incredible number of discoveries. Make no doubt, somebody somewhere will try human cloning, its too seductive to resist. Other great discoveries await us. Here is a hyper-text that leads to an article on the stopping of light.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/sci/tech/newsid\\_1124000/1124540.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/sci/tech/newsid_1124000/1124540.stm)

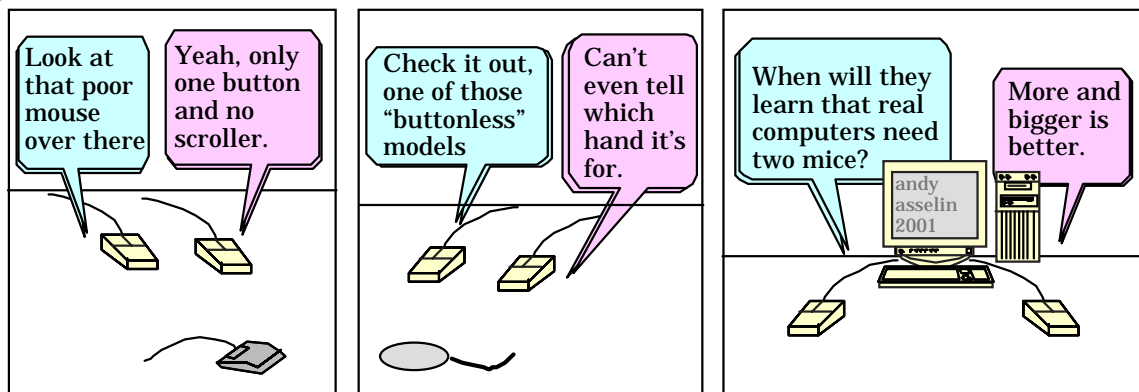
As well, years ago, faster than light signals were demonstrated. These discoveries (and others) will move us toward a holistic quantum culture, which holds the promise of a prosperous future for human(e) kind.

Of course one challenge might be to modify the quality of our environmental impact.

<http://news.excite.com/news/r/010122/05/news-environment-warming-dc>

Many articles have talked about impending environmental disaster(s). It remains to be seen, but likely only then will the proper technologies be embraced, when the paradigm turns to survival.

It is at this turning point that we have the opportunity to change our goals towards empassion (new word?), joy, bliss, enlightenment... and so on (go ahead pick one). Until then I think/feel our aim for elegance, tolerance of our diversity, and excellence of our entire being is making the difference. This is something I have found to be great with membership of ADETA. I hope to rediscover it again, to continue co-creating with you and the great creator. Regardless, it is an opportunity for us to be excellent to ourselves and to each other.



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### President's Message

Continued from page 2

programs in all of the Land and Horticultural based programs. Courses are 3 days to 6 mths in length depending upon our client's needs. We presently provide training to domestic, international and distance delivery clients.

Hello my name is Bonita Hudson (email: ahudson@telusplanet.net). I work for Rosebud School of the Arts (which runs both a Fine Arts College and a Dinner & Theatre) doing Web Coordination and possibly managing a Virtual School in the near future. I am also taking the Master of Distance Education Program at Athabasca University and managing four children and a husband.

Hello my name is Keith Coates, Coordinator of Career and Continuing Education SD #5, SouthEast Kootenay (kcoates@kootenaycable.com or 250-423-4624). I am new to ADETA after attending the Online Learning Symposium in Edmonton this fall. I look after three Learning

Centers in the Elk Valley, designed to offer computer assisted learning to adults who have not completed high school graduation, and to offer upgrading to anyone who needs it. We are trying to establish partnerships with post secondary institutions such as SAIT and BCIT to become remote satellite sites for their distance learning? Without success so far. We also cater to 40+ home learners who have a mix of computer assisted programs through Success maker and Plato and some rudimentary online. The future for centers like ours seems to be in the online world, so my goal for the next while is to become as familiar with what is available as possible, and to build a helping network of current practitioners. ADETA seems to be an organization which will help here. Any information, links, organizations you could recommend gratefully accepted.

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### ADETA Board

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# Musings of a Corporate Guru: A Report on a Masie E-Learning Briefing



by **Ramona Materi**

The academic world is not alone in its exploration of web-based training tools. Many large companies are also examining the implications of “e-learning” and implementing small and large-scale projects in this area. Projections by the Corporate University Xchange are that by 2003, company learning will shift to 40 percent e-learning and 60 percent classroom instruction. (Source: [www.corpu.com](http://www.corpu.com))

This article reports on a two day E-learning Briefing given in January 2001 by Elliott Masie of the Masie Center ([www.masie.com](http://www.masie.com)). Masie is well known in technology training circles and has written 12 books and has presented programs to over 300 000 professionals in 25 countries. He heads the Masie Center, which bills itself as the “Technology and Learning Thinktank.” It carries out ongoing research on corporate training and technology issues and its staff has consulted to over 3000 organizations. The Center holds a Tech Learn Conference in Florida each year; in 2000 it attracted over 3700 delegates from the corporate world. It also conducts regular on-line surveys on e-learning topics.

The Seattle briefing attracted 172

people, mostly from large companies, like Microsoft, Boeing, Nike, General Electric, and others. In keeping with its e-learning focus, the in-person session was followed by two synchronous on-line audio briefings.

## **E-learning: A Definition**

Masie defines e-learning as “the use of technology and new business models to design, deliver, select and extend learning and training.” He noted that many Fortune 50 companies avoid the use of the term e-learning, preferring to call it simply “learning.” Companies, he says, are shifting from developing “training” to offering tools to help learning and workplace performance. (For more detailed information on corporate e-learning and knowledge management, see for example, Marc Rosenberg’s book *E-learning: Strategies for delivering knowledge in the digital age*. (2001)

## **Masie’s Corporate E-learning Trends for 2001**

- **Less text, more audio** – Courses will offer less reading and more listening. Many companies have to train large numbers of people quickly, some with poor literacy skills. Participants examined a real-life case study in which a large fast food provider with high turnover must train 370 000 workers in 22 countries.
- **Balance between synchronous and asynchronous** – The majority of companies Masie has surveyed say that their e-learning offerings will be split almost evenly between synchronous and asynchronous modes.
- **Peer to peer learning** will be-

come increasingly important. Masie foresees a “Napster” model for knowledge and learning. Look for instant messaging type applications where an employee in one store can get training from another located elsewhere—and on a just-in-time basis.

- **More simulations** – It is important to allow learners to test themselves in realistic environments, with failure as a possible outcome. In May, two software companies will be releasing simplified tools for creating simulations.
- **On-line communities** – Masie sees a growing use of facilitated learning communities. To be successful, the communities should be small, be relevant to the user’s job and have a purpose beyond just reflecting on learning.
- **E-learning for supplier and customer training** will become more important than using e-learning as an employee training tool.

## **Longer Term E-learning Trends**

In the next three to five years, Masie sees e-learning continuing to grow as a corporate training tool, even if the United States enters a recession. His surveys show that companies already using e-learning will continue to develop it; the slowdown will come from companies who have not yet implemented e-learning. These firms will likely put these any e-learning plans on hold. He commented on other trends, including:

Continued on page 12



There is continuing debate about what open learning is, and how it relates to distance education. To date, there are no definitive answers;

however, some authors do tend to associate distance education with open learning, almost as if they are synonymous. This is a risky association since 'openness' can occur on a number of different dimensions. For example, an agency can be open with respect to: admission requirements, course schedules, learning objectives or outcomes, policies, and costs. Indeed, many distance education agencies are open on some but not all of these dimensions. For example, most of AU's undergraduate programs are open admission and have open schedules. That is, the applicants do not have to possess an academic high school diploma for admission and, further, they can enroll on the first day of any month in most courses. The courses and programs are not usually open as to the objectives or learning outcomes. Open Universities in developing countries may see themselves as open; however, they may be open only in the sense that there is no competitive admission process. That is, all applicants must still possess the requisite secondary education credential; however, they don't have to compete and have the highest grades to be admitted. Openness may be a relative term. Further, distance education agencies may not necessarily possess any of the attributes we associate with 'openness,' but many do so.

You may also encounter the terms Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and Open and Distance Education (ODE). These are terms in common

usage primarily in the British literature and they appear to be a means by which communications can cover the broadest possible range of distance education applications.

### **Adult Education and Learning**

References to adult education and the principles of adult learning are very common in distance education. This is not because the two are synonymous; rather, it is because much of distance education serves adult learners. At the same time, it is important to tread carefully with respect to this term since it cannot be automatically assumed that a distance education agency necessarily employs principles of adult education.

### **Learner-Centred Education**

The term 'learner-centred' education is usually used in contrast to teacher-centred education; it refers to a philosophical or value orientation that places equal or greater importance on the needs and opinions of the learner than on those of the teacher, curriculum, or institution. Learner-centred education is usually characterized by being based on careful needs assessments, providing flexible learning options and being open in a variety of ways. However, you may encounter educational activity that calls itself 'learner-centred,' but looks quite conventional in most ways, and so you might want to maintain a healthy scepticism about what is, or is not, learner-centred education.

### **Independent Study**

'Independent study' generally refers to situations where prepared packages of instructional materials are provided to learners who complete the required activities and assignments through self-study. The packages may vary from loosely assembled print resource materials packages to very sophisticated complexly designed multimedia packages. For

example, some independent study materials are entirely self-sufficient and self-instructional packages that can be used without recourse to other resources for support (e.g., correspondence materials). Others are a loose collection of resources to which the learner is directed (e.g., resource-based learning).

In some cases, learners have regular and continuing access to human support, such as tutors; in others, they work alone. For example, Athabasca University usually provides its 'home study' students with course materials packages and access to a telephone tutor on a regular basis, whereas other institutions may not provide tutorial support. Independent study may also occur within traditional, campus-based education.

### **External Studies and Continuing Education**

The term 'external studies' is relatively common in Australia and Britain, but relatively uncommon in Canada. It generally describes both credit and non-credit off-campus and distance education activities. In Canada, such programs are usually called 'extension education,' or 'continuing education' and, as in Australia and Britain, Canadian institutions may define them differently. They may be credit or non-credit programs, and they may be offered through on-campus, evening and weekend programs, or through distance education.

### **Technology-Based Education**

Increasingly, especially in North America and Western Europe, distance education is capitalizing on the potential of communications technologies. Terms such as 'distributed education' and 'online learning' are becoming more common. There is considerable variation in the range and extent of application of technologies of various kinds and it is becoming increasingly difficult to ensure

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clear communications prevail with respect to the various terms.

In general, technology-based education spans a range from relatively modest uses of communications technologies such as telephone, fax, and electronic mail, though substantial uses of very sophisticated and complex text, audio, and video communications using both synchronous and asynchronous methods. Both distance and campus-based educational agencies are making use of these technologies giving rise to a perception of increasing convergence between distance and campus-based studies. It is important to continue to view these arguments with some skepticism since it is quite unclear whether the use of technologies in conventional institutions is actually as similar to the uses in distance education as it may first appear. For example, while some uses of technology by conventional institutions permits students to participate from their homes or other remote sites, it is often the case that these students do not receive the kinds of distance support that distance agencies usually provide. Nor do their needs appear to have been considered in the organization, planning, and delivery processes. In essence then, at least some of these applications by campus-based agencies appear to be more nearly 'electronic extensions' of campuses than the provision of educational opportunities to remote learners.

While there is limited consensus about definitions, we can describe the ways in which the various terms appear to be being used at this time.

- 'Distributed education' is an increasingly common term that appears to have emerged initially in the United States and is being used in Canada as well. The term tends to refer to multi-site and/or Internet-based educational provi-

sion. It is usually associated with institution-paced, group-based distance education delivery predicated on the use of relatively highly interactive technologies.

- 'Online Learning' is similar to 'distributed education' or 'distributed learning'; however, implicit in this term is also the assumption that all or almost all of the learning materials will also be available electronically. That is, in online courses there is usually no associated print materials or materials that cannot be delivered electronically.
- 'Computer-supported Distance Education' tends to refer to those distance education applications in which electronic communications are utilized; however, they are not the only communications processes employed. AU's MDE is an example of this in which materials are still sent to students using the usual postal delivery systems; however, e-mail, computer conferencing, file transfers, and other electronic communications devices are regularly employed.

It should be noted that the majority of distance education worldwide occurs in some of the world's poorest countries. While they too, are increasingly using electronic communications facilities, they are primarily using these between and among their staff, faculty, and administrative agencies and relatively rarely are students able to access these resources personally. These distance education applications tend still, to be based on print, regional offices, and less expensive technologies.

Gail Crawford, Ph.D. 780-675-6219  
Athabasca University  
gail@athabascau.ca

Musing of a Corporate Guru from pg. 10

- **Business units**, not the training department, will increasingly lead the e-learning revolution in companies. Employees will need quick access to learning and training, and line managers will look for ways to meet this need.
- Training may move from focusing on upgrading the skills and knowledge of individuals to **upgrading teams**. This trend may be particularly important in the area of soft skills.
- **Audio and video tools** will become increasingly important, as technologies improve and bandwidth increases.
- In 2003, a corporate **training department may look like the CNN or other television network newsroom**. For example, investment banker Goldman Sachs promotes rapid knowledge transfer from one employee to another. In the future, the training department might debrief the person who just made a large investment deal, then take this "feed" and link it into an ever-changing knowledge management site. Like news room editors, the job of trainers will be to review all the information coming from line departments, assure consistency and relevancy to the various corporate audiences, then place this information on the site based on importance and interest.

#### **Masie's Comments on Designing and Implementing E-learning**

However many the glossy reports and enthusiastic speeches on the "knowledge revolution," it is clear that many companies are still finding their way with e-learning. Masie noted that one unnamed company spent almost US\$8 million to develop an enterprise wide "e-learning

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solution.” Nine employees took the program. Masie believes firms would do well to examine some university and college programs for ideas on successful e-learning implementation.

**Other comments:**

- **Poor internal marketing** – Well-designed e-learning can offer a firm significant benefits. Training departments do a poor job of marketing and explaining e-learning to their internal buyers.
- **Traditional instructional designers** need to rapidly invest in upgrading their technical skills and knowledge. With e-learning, they must use different tools and also develop a different style of design. Designers have far less control over the scope and sequence of learning. At present, says Masie, the “default behavior for (corporate) e-learning is departure” due to the poor instructional design of many courses and offerings.
- **Authoring tools** designed specifically for e-learning are few in number. Masie believes more are needed, but software companies see such tools as “unsexy.” He thinks universities have a role to play in developing new tools, as they did with the Mosaic and the Internet browser.
- **Be a smart consumer when buying an LMS** - Currently, more than 115 Learning Management Systems are available in the marketplace. They are being joined by software called CMS, or Content Management Systems. Masie advises companies to carefully consider their needs, ask for proposals from 3–4 vendors, and be conscious that the LMS company may go out of

business, be merged, or stop supporting the product. The key to protection is ensuring that the LMS or CMS conforms to the standards now being developed for these products. Ask lots of questions and don't take vague responses as valid answers, he says.

- **Multitasking** – Masie's surveys show that 60–64 percent of professionals carry out a variety of other tasks while engaged in e-learning. (For example, checking their e-mail while listening to an on-line lecture.) As a result, designers need to increase the “intensity” and interest of their offerings. They should also look to develop sessions of a maximum of 50 minutes, with the optimum being under 30 minutes.
- **Environmental factors and privacy.** Many professionals access corporate e-learning from home or outside of regular working hours. Learning at a desk in a busy office is hard and leads to current abandonment rates of over 50 percent. People need privacy, plus visible support from their manager that they are not “goofing off.” In a cubicle environment, some companies use yellow police tape, balloons, or flags to indicate someone is e-learning. Others designate a separate desk. Masie advises that to succeed, the training department must address these problems when developing an e-learning program, and not leave it to the learner to find solutions.

**Some Personal Reflections**

As billed, the conference explored the cutting edge of e-learning trends. Masie is an informative and entertaining presenter, and the two days, from my perspective, were well spent. It was an energizing experi-

ence to be with other instructional designers and trainers who develop e-learning projects. As Masie noted (to much laughter), “I'll bet you're glad to be surrounded by people who actually understand what you do!”

As an instructional designer, the conference made me conscious of the importance of adding synchronous or real-time sessions to a course. To date in our courses, we have relied on classroom training to provide this, while keeping the on-line portion of the course wholly asynchronous. I expanded my idea of what a “blended” course might consist of; it could have some parts asynchronous, but also real-time sessions, offered on-line. I left realizing our company needed to examine ways to build in more of these “real-time” on-line sessions — the tools to do it are out there, even for low bandwidth environments.

My most dominant impression was how new e-learning is in many companies, even the large multinationals and information technology companies. Many of the projects and case studies we explored were in progress, or launched only 6–12 months earlier. It was clear that many firms are finding their way, sometimes guessing right, while on other occasions spending millions of dollars for minimal returns. Participants were hungry for actual case studies and practical advice.

It was a great conference—if Masie is back next year, I'll be sure to attend.

Ramona Materi is the President of Ingenia Training, ([www.ingenia-training.com](http://www.ingenia-training.com)) a company specializing in e-learning development. Ramona can be reached at (604) 990-4091 or [rmateri@ingenia-training.com](mailto:rmateri@ingenia-training.com).

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# Announcements

## New Edition of the IRRODL Journal Released

*International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning (IRRODL)*, Vol. 1, No. 2, is now available at: <http://www.irrodl.org/current.html>.

Visit the site and read the seven case studies of single and dual mode distance education institutions that have moved complete programs and support systems to online delivery. Dominique Abrioux, Athabasca University, is guest editor of this theme issue—*Converting to Online Course and Program Delivery: Global Perspectives*.

The case studies follow a common systems format that explains each organization's internal culture, structures and processes, the external social and environmental factors, and the demands within which the institution operated. This context in turn gives rise to a chronicle of critical events and an analysis of their intended, and unintended, consequences, thereby casting light on the program conversion's affect both on strategic planning and institutional management, and on the key course development and delivery systems.

### **IRRODL Vol. 1, No. 2 (January 2001) Table of Contents**

#### **Main Section**

##### *Guest Editorial*

Dominique A.M.X. Abrioux, Athabasca University

*The NKI Internet College: A review of 15 years delivery of 10,000 online courses*

Morten Paulsen and Torstein Rekke-dal, NKI Internet College

*Online Delivery of Programmes: A case study of IGNOU*

Ramesh Sharma, Indira Ghandi National Open University

*Athabasca University: Conversion from Traditional Distance Education to Online Courses, Programs and Services*

Alan Davis, Athabasca University

*Deakin University: Going online at a Dual Mode University*

Jocelyn Calvert, Deakin University

*Converting to Online Course and Program Delivery: The University of South Australia Case Study*

Bruce King, Holly McCausland and Ted Nunan, University of South Australia

*Empire State College: The Development of Online Learning*

Patricia J. Lefor, Meg Benke and Evelyn Ting, Empire State College

*Converting Student Support Services To Online Delivery*

David E. Brigham, Regents College

#### **Book Reviews**

*Managing Technological Change: Strategies for College and University Leaders*

A. W. (Tony) Bates (2000)  
(Reviewed by Byron R. Burnham, Utah State University)

*Open and Distance Learning in the Developing World*

Hilary Perraton (2000)  
(Reviewed by Luis Galarza, DePaul University)

*Higher Education through Open and Distance Learning (World review of distance education and open learning: Volume 1)*

Keith Harry (Ed.) (1999)  
(Reviewed by Paul Steyn, University of South Africa)

*International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning (IRRODL)*

[www.irrodl.org](http://www.irrodl.org)

ISSN 1492-3831

Send inquiries to:

[irrodl@athabascau.ca](mailto:irrodl@athabascau.ca)

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First Canadian Research Chair in Distance Education appointed to Athabasca University recently announced that former ADETA President Terry Anderson has been awarded one of the 195 Federally funded "Canadian Research Chairs" (see <http://www.chairs.gc.ca>). The Research Chair at Athabasca is the only one in Canada devoted to the study of distance education. Athabasca University has made 'distance education' a focus of their strategic research plan and will build its research strength in this critical area. Terry is looking forward to working collaboratively with faculty and tutors at Athabasca and has been developing a research agenda focused on the costs and educational benefits of student, teacher, and content interaction. Terry will be leaving the University of Alberta in August of this year.

Terry Anderson, 780-492 0023

[terry.anderson@ualberta.ca](mailto:terry.anderson@ualberta.ca)

<http://www.atl.ualberta.ca>

**Check out the new Campus Alberta Repository of Educational Objects Web site at <http://careo.merlot.org>**

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# Announcements

## ADETA Research Award



As practicing distance educators and trainers, many ADETA members may have contributions to make to our understanding of this field. In order to support and encourage research and reflection on practice, ADETA has established an annual award for the best research project completed by one of its members. This year the award consists of a free registration to Interface 2001, which will be held in Lethbridge May 30 - June 1 (see <http://interface2001.uleth.ca/>). The winner will also receive \$150.00 toward expenses incurred in attending the conference.

The criteria for the selection of the winning submission are:

1. Relevance to ADETA members
2. Quality and rigor of the research design and implementation
3. Impact of the results on the theory or the practice of distance education

The selection committee is chaired by the past-president of ADETA.

Please note that the committee is not looking only for scholarly or theoretical submissions, but also for projects that systematically examine or evaluate practices of our members. The project should be documented in such a way that the results or findings are accessible to ADETA members and the general public either through electronic or paper format. The project summary and results will be printed in the ADETA newsletter.

The deadline for submissions has been set for April 20, 2001. Please forward your submission by mail, fax, or email to the address below. If your research is already published online, please provide the URL.

Pat Fahy  
Past-President  
[patf@athabascau.ca](mailto:patf@athabascau.ca)  
Fax: 780-675-6170

## Announcing New ADETA Board Member



The ADETA Board would like to welcome Stephen who is replacing Jerry Pon on the Executive.

Stephen Walker is a teacher with the Alberta Distance Learning Centre in Barhead, Alberta. Not only is he new to ADETA, but he is also new to ADLC. He

joined the team at ADLC in July of 2000 and has been working in the area of Sr. High course development for the Career and Technology Studies strands in Design and Communication Technology. Much of his development work has focused on the teaching and delivery of a 3D digital animation course for students across the province.

Prior to Stephen's career at ADLC, Stephen taught at RF Staples Secondary School in Westlock in the area of Construction, Fabrication, and Science. A graduate of the University of Alberta, Stephen held the position of President of the Alberta Career and Technology Studies Student Association, and has been a member of the CTS Specialist Council and the Alberta Science Council over the past few years.

Stephen comes to ADETA with much enthusiasm and interest in professional development for distance education. Stephen hopes that his experience and desire will help to promote distance education to serve a community of educator's and learners across the province. Stephen welcomes your participation and can be reached at (780) 674 5333 ext. 305 or his email is [swalker@phrd.ab.ca](mailto:swalker@phrd.ab.ca).

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# Conferences & Workshops

## **The Virtual Classroom Gets Real: Leading edge technologies for virtual learning**

Academic Technologies for Learning and the Telus Centre for Professional Development are pleased to offer a seminar on the latest developments in web-based distributed learning-real-time virtual learning.

The appetite for 'live instruction' and real-time instructor-led sessions over the Internet is increasing at a substantial rate. Students want the online presence of their instructors and peers and to communicate with them in real time. These technologies also promise an easy transition of existing content into a web-based environment and the cost efficiency and convenience provided by real-time delivery.

The event will demonstrate a number of key technologies used in delivering courses or training at a distance or augmenting/enhancing existing distributed learning approaches. Feature-rich, high-end systems will be profiled in addition to lower cost options. Practitioners will discuss their use of real-time technologies focusing on benefits, drawback, and address practical concerns.

Seating is limited so don't miss out on this unique opportunity.

When: March 22, 2001. 9:00 a.m.  
12:00 p.m.

Where: Telus Centre for Professional Development University of Alberta

Cost: Free for University of Alberta Faculty, Staff, and Students. \$25.00 for external participants.

Registration: Contact Melissa Robinson at 780-492-8000 or melissa.robinson@ualberta.ca

Please mail cheques or money orders to Academic Technologies for Learning.  
4-14 University Extension Centre,  
University of Alberta, Edmonton AB  
T6G 2T4

For further Information: Contact  
Janice Picard at 780-492-8424 or  
Robert Aucoin at 780-492-8596.



**CANADIAN ASSOCIATION  
FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION**

## **CADE 2002**

**Calgary, May 26 - 29, 2002**

**At the Telus Convention Centre**

**ICDE North American Region**

[Http://www.icde.org](http://www.icde.org)

Primary Hosting Institution is  
Athabasca University

**Athabasca University**  
Canada's Open University



## **20th World Conference on Open Learning and Distance Education**

**Duesseldorf, Germany**

**April 1-5, 2001**

The Future of Learning-Learning for  
the Future: Shaping the Transition

For more information visit  
[http://www.fernuni-hagen.de/ICDE/  
D-2001/](http://www.fernuni-hagen.de/ICDE/D-2001/)



Athabasca University's 2001 Distance Education Technologies Workshop is scheduled for May 18-20 in Vancouver. For more information check out the Web site at  
<http://cde.athabascau.ca/DET/2001/>

To find out more about other Conferences that are coming up, check out The Distance Education Clearinghouse conference list at  
[www.uwex.edu/disted](http://www.uwex.edu/disted).

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# Conferences & Workshops



## Fourth Annual Educational Technology Summer Institute. Get Connected

Mount Royal College is pleased to announce the **Fourth Annual Educational Technology Summer Institute. Get Connected**, offered in partnership by Mount Royal College and PanCanadian, is an exciting week-long program that explores the use of web-based technology to enhance, develop, and deliver curriculum.

The Institute is open to educators interested in integrating technology into their teaching practices. Join our group of enthusiastic, trained professionals, to broaden or refine your skills and knowledge of web-based curriculum development and technologies.

The Fourth Annual Get Connected Summer Institute

will be held June 18—22, 2001, Mount Royal College, Calgary, Alberta.

You can find out more about registering for the Summer Institute by contacting:

Brenda Quantz

Summer Institute Coordinator

Phone: (403) 240-7231

Email: [bquantz@mtroyal.ab.ca](mailto:bquantz@mtroyal.ab.ca) or

visit our website at

[www.mtroyal.ab.ca/](http://www.mtroyal.ab.ca/)

summer\_institute

## Interface 2001, An Alberta Odyssey

University of Lethbridge & Lethbridge Community College

May 30th, 31st, June 1st 2001

### Hosted by:

Alberta Distance Education and Training Association (ADETA)

CML Provincial Users' Group

The University of Lethbridge

Lethbridge Community College



## THE UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE

# ADETA

Alberta Distance Education & Training Association



We would like to invite you to Lethbridge for Interface 2001: An Alberta Odyssey. Our theme for the conference is "Charting a Course with our Learners." As with all Interface conferences we look forward to another rewarding event.

Mark Schneider, CTV's Vancouver Bureau Chief and host of Digital Desk will be our keynote speaker on Thursday morning. Brian Keating from the Calgary Zoo will speak/entertain us Thursday evening. In addition to these keynotes, we have great pre-conference and concurrent sessions. There will be a hands-on alley throughout the conference for you to experience new software in distance education.

Our Call for Proposals is online now. If you are interested in sharing with your colleagues at Interface, please submit your proposal right away.

All the information you need about the conference, including registration forms can be found at <http://interface2001.uleth.ca>.

## Keynote Speakers

CTV News

Vancouver Bureau Chief

**Mark Schneider**



Head of Conservation Outreach  
Calgary Zoological Society

**Brian Keating**

More information over

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# Interface 2001, An Alberta Odyssey

University of Lethbridge & Lethbridge Community College  
May 30th, 31st, June 1st 2001

## Conference Overview

**Interface 2001 will focus on the design, development, and delivery of courses in the information age**, whether these courses are offered in a classroom or at a distance. This conference will be of interest to educators and support staff in high schools, colleges, technical institutes, and universities who want to learn how best to use technology to meet the needs of their students. This conference will provide an opportunity for those involved in using technology in education and distance education to interface with others in the field. It will be a chance to find out what others are up to and what strategies are being used to enhance teaching and learning. For many it will be a chance to catch up with colleagues they have not seen for some time and an opportunity to make new contacts and friends. Interface 2001 will also provide an opportunity to see what new technologies are available and how they are being implemented in various situations. The conference will comprise the following events:

- preconference workshops
- keynote presentations
- concurrent sessions
- best practices roundtables
- vendor exhibits
- social evening
- wrap-up session

Conference Fees:

### Before April 15th

ADETA Member or CMLPUG Member \$200  
Non member \$250

### After April 15th

ADETA Member or CMLPUG Member \$250  
Non member \$300

### Preconference Workshops

Half-day sessions \$25

### Registration Fee Includes:

- All workshops and sessions on Thursday and Friday
- Wine and Cheese on Wednesday evening
- Morning and afternoon coffee breaks on Thursday and Friday
- Lunch on Thursday and Friday
- Banquet on Thursday evening
- Entry into conference door prizes draw on Friday
- Conference tote bag, T-shirt and other conference goodies

## Tentative Agenda

Wednesday May 30

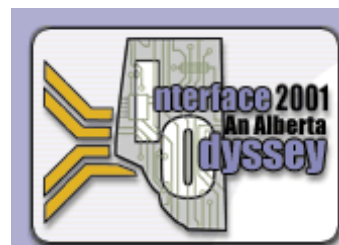
- Preconference Workshops
- Wine and Cheese at the Lethbridge Community College Barn

Thursday May 31

- Keynote Speaker
- Concurrent Workshops/Sessions
- Vendor Exhibits
- Lunch
- Annual General Meetings
- Banquet: U of L East Patio with Speaker

Friday June 1

- Sharing Sessions
- Concurrent Workshops/Sessions
- Vendor Exhibits
- Lunch
- Conference wrap-up and Prizes



Deadline for submissions for proposals for presentations is March 15th 2001

**For more information, please contact Jeff Hamilton at [jeff.hamilton@LETHBRIDGECOLLEGE.AB.CA](mailto:jeff.hamilton@LETHBRIDGECOLLEGE.AB.CA) or by phone at (403) 317-3524.**

**Or Visit the Conference Web site at <http://interface2001.uleth.ca>**