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The Distance

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Inside

Virtual Teaming:
It's not just for Distance Educators Anymore

Elizabeth Childs, Tammy Dewar & Dave Whittington

Virtual teams and working in the virtual environment are increasingly becoming the way in which work is done both within and between organizations. Virtual teaming offers increased flexibility in the way in which work is conducted and has several potential benefits; flexibility of time and place being two of the most frequently cited (Bock, 2003; Jude-York, Davis & Wise, 2000). Almost ten years ago Lipnack and Stamps (1997) made the following observation, "in the coming decades, most people will work in virtual teams for at least some part of their jobs" (p. 5). Parker (2003) observes that most teams in the workplace are now diverse and virtual requiring members and leaders alike to develop a new set of skills in order to work effectively in these "leading teams of strangers" (p. 1).

There are a variety of different types of virtual teams that have been identified in the literature (Jude-York et al., 2000). Given the changing nature of the workplace, people participate in a number of these teams simultaneously and the types are not exclusive. In cross-functional virtual teams, people from different functional areas are brought together to achieve a common purpose that may or may not be time-limited. Horizontal virtual teams generally are constructed so that all members of the team share an equivalent position in the hierarchy, and are brought together to achieve a common purpose. Self-directed virtual teams are teams without formal leaders. The roles and responsibilities are determined by the team, and not dictated from the outside

It is now well documented in the literature (Henry & Hartzler, 1998; Jude-York et al., 2000; Lipnack & Stamps, 1997) that working in virtual teams is more difficult than in face-to-face teams. People operating in virtual teams need to address several unique challenges some of which include (1) managing across distances and time zones, (2) shifting team membership or membership on multiple teams, (3) defining norms for the team that are appropriate to its mission, (4) "boundarylessness" or ambiguity in what used to be well-defined and predictable work practices, and (5) culture and regional differences.

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About the Authors

Elizabeth Childs uses her PhD in Educational Technology and her experience in education and training to inform her consulting practice. She has worked in a variety of sectors to analyze, implement and evaluate training and human performance interventions. The majority of her work is done at a distance and virtual project teams make up most of the way in which Elizabeth collaborates with others to complete projects and manage programs.

Tammy Dewar combines an academic background in learning (Ph.D. in Adult Learning) with practical leadership and team expertise in a variety of sectors. Her independent consulting practice includes over fifteen years of experience in leading virtual project teams to design, deliver and evaluate face-to-face and virtual learning experiences in both the public and private sectors.

Dave Whittington has been carrying out research into the uses of educational technology for more than 20 years and holds a PhD in computer science. His experience of e-learning and virtual teams ranges from being a student of the UK's Open University to being the technical director of one of Europe's first virtual university.

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Editor's Message

Camille Jensen

Another season … a time for change. The new ADETA Board has been busy all Fall: the Fall Workshop, a Board Retreat, a new relationship with Elluminate Live! for PD sessions, a facelift to the web page, I have a picture and a new helper too!

I am pleased to welcome NAIT's own Angela Kress to the Editorial team as the layout artist for the newsletter. I have limped my way through the challenging process of layout for the past seven issues. Client commitments in my consulting business have usurped my extracurricular time of late. Angela has been gracious enough to share here extra curricular time. And so, through a collection of MSN audio chats, nightly emails, FTP downloads, PDF comments and late nights, we are pleased to present the Winter 2005 issue!

You may notice some soft style changes here and there. The structure of the content remains riveted with tidbits of announcements (including details on Interface), constructed mainly of articles and Updates from the Field, and concludes with the never dull, Sidethought.

So, before I compose another run-on sentence, I welcome your comments and suggestions, as always!

Ciao,

Camille

About this Publication

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Individual Members:
Individual members may participate in all discussions, have one vote on all issues and hold office.
Annual Individual Membership: $35.00

Student Members:
Student members may participate in all discussions but do not have a vote and cannot hold office.
Annual Student Membership: $10.00

For more information: www.adeta.org

President's Message

Sandi Barber

I admit it. I don't enjoy cooking ... that is in the kitchen. I don't know what it is about the process that I don't enjoy. Is it the planning, buying the supplies, or following directions? Perhaps all of the above! Inadvertently I miss a step or do things out of order. My family will tell you that the end product is always a bit of a surprise.

Designing learning is a lot like cooking. The end result of our design and execution of the "recipe" affects how our students learn. The options that are available to those of us who design learning is endless. Designing the best blend of learning tools and techniques ultimately affects our learners.

Let me get the record straight. Unlike cooking, I enjoy designing learning experiences! To see a course come to life from a concept to a tangible interactive product is exciting!

There is no perfect recipe for a blended learning experience. Just as we do while cooking something new, we often learn to adjust the recipe on the fly. We make additions, deletions and add our own unique touch. And when it is done, we gather feedback from our users. We learn from our mistakes-and our successes. I am always asking myself, what I can do differently next time. What "tweaking" needs to be done to the recipe!

The recipe metaphor is useful in describing working with our new ADETA Board. It has been a busy half year since the new ADETA Board was elected. We have done the usual things that new teams do. We've formed, stormed, conformed and hopefully you can see us performing!!!

Blended Learning Recipe

Ingredients

2/8 Asynchronous Discussions
2/8 Online Journaling
2/8 Web Seminar Events
2/8 Classroom Seminar

add a pinch of human

Directions:

Mix first three ingredients together until blending is smooth and seamless. Fold in two classroom seminars. Add a pinch of instructor personality. Serve. Share your experience with others at conferences.

We are changing our recipe to serve you better! Here is what we've been up to so far ...

Communication News:

Hopefully you've noticed that we have a new look for our ADETA website **www.adeta.org**. Thanks to those of you who contacted us with your opinions and suggestions on further improvements.

Board News:

Frank Scully said "Why not go out on a limb? Isn't that where the fruit is? ." Our board has been busy doing just that. We have been brainstorming about the future direction of ADETA and looking for new opportunities for growth and development of the organization.

Currently we are engaged in a strategic planning process. Our first face-to-face meeting as a new board was a retreat in Red Deer prior to the Fall Workshop. Kim Arsenault of Meridian Learning facilitated the process. Next we will continue with a second meeting planned in the next month where we will be examining ADETA's purpose and activities. Are they still relevant to our membership? What opportunities do we see for future growth and development of our association? Does your membership in ADETA add value to your professional practice?

To help us answer these and other important questions our team will be surveying the membership via our ADETA listserv this spring. Your participation in this survey will help us make important decisions about the future direction of ADETA.

Professional Development News:

Sharing our experiences in "cooking up" new curriculum is also part of the learning and improving our professional practice. Our professional development events are proving to be very popular. Thanks to Norquest College, we are embracing a new technology for our monthly professional development sessions. Next time you sign up for one of these lively events you will use SPORG registration and Elluminate synchronous technology. Our first event on Blogs in Education: Uses and Pitfalls presented by Scott Leslie was sold out! Our board has also embraced the Elluminate technology, making the transition from monthly audio conference calls to this technology.

Special Events News:

We've been juggling many new initiatives. However our biggest task of the year is to create and host the ADETA Interface conference. **www.nait.ca/interface2005/index.htm** I am excited about the line up so far. With Bill Fricker in charge it will prove to be a memorable occasion. Plan to join us at Interface 2005, this year. This year's conference, hosted by NAIT on June 8, 9, 10 is an excellent place to hear about new "recipes" for learning, and to share your own unique creation with our ADETA community.

This year's conference, titled Juggling with E's, promises to be rich with a blend of new recipes, old favorites and lots of human touch! I look forward to hearing about what you have been cooking up this year!

Collaboration News:

We are expanding our reach for Interface this year to the corporate training sector. The Alberta Chapter of the CSTD (Canadian Association of Training and Development) is endorsing the Interface conference as their spring membership professional development event. I look forward to networking and meeting their members!

You can see we've been busy! They say there are three kinds of people in the world: those who make things happen, those who watch things happen and those who wonder what happened. I am very fortunate to be working with those people who can make things happen!

Announcements

Live & Hands On: ADETA Fall Workshop Lived Up to Its Theme

Sheila Whitmore

The ADETA Fall Workshop held at Red Deer College on November 17, 2004, was themed 'Live & Hands On', and the crowd of over 50 participants and a dozen presenters brought energy and talent to the day's proceedings.

Sandi Barber, ADETA President, opened the workshop and John Chapman, VP of Administrative Services for Red Deer College, welcomed the participants and spoke briefly about the beautiful College Side facilities in which the workshop was hosted. Opening speaker Kevin Campbell from the Stakeholder Technology Branch of Alberta Learning provided an overview of the directions that Alberta Learning has taken to support technology in learning.

Full of good tidings, muffins, and coffee, the participants, led by John Howie and Anne Brodie of RDC, set out for the various labs and classrooms for the morning's concurrent sessions. Andrew Reil from Mount Royal College presented a session on concept mapping using SMART Ideas software. Kim Arsenault of Meridian Learning and Development led a session on improving online facilitation using reflective practice. Red Deer College's Educational Technology Specialist, Stacey Mateika, demonstrated using Camtasia Studio to create videos of PC desktop activity. These lively, informative sessions had participants eagerly discussing them during the lunch break. Thanks to RDC's Event Coordinator Anne Brodie and the food services crew at Red Deer College for the tasty lunch.

ADETA President Sandi Barber outlined the afternoon's sessions and announced the winners of several door prizes before sending the participants off to the afternoon's sessions. Instructional design consultants Nicole Luchkow and Wendy Wilton led their session participants through using the extension Course Builder in a DreamWeaver environment. Bill Fricker and John Kent demonstrated the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology's interactive videoconferencing capabilities in a session that incorporated Bill's involvement from NAIT. Another NAIT presenter, Stjepan Balenovic of the Media Design and Production unit, led a session on the elements of good design for courses using several examples, challenging participants to critique a variety of product designs. Participants ended the workshop back at the main reception room for the plenary session by Cathy Simpson and Colin Geissler of the Stakeholder Involvement, LearnAlberta.ca, Learning Technologies Branch of Alberta Learning.

The presentation addressed the benefits and processes of developing interactive elements, and skillfully demonstrated some of the elements developed by LearnAlberta. Before sending the tired but happy participants on their way home, Sandi Barber concluded the day with another round of door prizes.

While the day centered on the sessions and speakers, opportunities for networking and collaboration were plentiful, and the volume of chatter and laughter in the main reception room indicated a high level of enthusiasm and enjoyment by everyone. The ADETA Board would like to take this opportunity to once again thank participants, speakers and presenters for making the annual ADETA Fall Workshop an event to be remembered.

Creating Common Ground: The CreativeCommons.ca Project

12pm to 1pm MT, March 22, 2005

As part of an international effort to facilitate the availability of open source licences and content, the Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic (CIPPIC) has recently translated the popular Creative Commons (cc) licence for use under Canadian law. The Canadian Creative Commons (cc|ca) licence enables Canadian digital creators to independently construct and attach open source copyright licences to their works. Read: No lawyers required! The basic premise of the Creative Commons movement is to encourage the proliferation of free (as in Freedom) creative content on the internet and avoid wasteful reinvention of the wheel. Debuting only two years ago, the cc licence has been embraced by creators world-wide and can currently be found in use on over 5,000,000 digital artworks ranging from text to sound to computer graphics as well as the websites through which they are promoted.

Stay tuned to the ADETA listserv and website for details on how to register for this free session.

Getting in the Game: Engaging E-Learners with Games

12pm to 1pm MT February 17, 2005

Registration is now open for this free session.
Deadline for registration is 12 pm, February 14, 2005.

Join our panel of experts as they discuss strategies to engage your students by incorporating games into your online courses. Find the fun factor for involving students in their own learning. There will be time for audience participation – make sure to have ready questions you would like to ask during this stimulating conversation.

Contact: **adeta_pd@yahoo.ca**

ADETA Research Award

Ingrid Stammer

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. The award consists of a free registration to Interface, along with $150.00 toward expenses incurred in attending the conference. Only current ADETA members are eligible for the award.

The criteria for the selection of the winning submission are:

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

The Research Award Selection Committee is chaired by the past-president of ADETA. To be considered for the award, applicants must be current ADETA members.

The purpose of the Research Award is to recognize and publicize research conducted by ADETA members which makes a contribution to our understanding of distance teaching or training and learning. Besides scholarly or theoretical submissions, the award is intended to for projects that systematically examine or evaluate practices of our members. The project should be documented in such a way that the results and findings are accessible to ADETA members and other interested groups. For this reason, longer works (major papers, theses, dissertations, project reports, etc.) must be summarized, in a maximum of 3000 words, before submission for consideration by the Research Award Selection Committee. If the research is already published online, the URL should be provided. A synopsis of the winning work will be printed in the ADETA newsletter, based on the summary provided. (The work's author is responsible for obtaining copyright clearance for ADETA's use of the material, if necessary.)

The deadline for submissions is April 30 annually. Nominations for the Research Award must be made by an ADETA member other than the author of the nominated work. Submissions may be forwarded by mail, fax, or email to the current past-president (address below), to the editor of the Newsletter, or to the general mailing address of ADETA.

Ingrid Stammer, Past-President
ingrid_stammer@cpr.ca
Phone: 403-319-7245 Fax: 403-3193368

Holiday Open House Favourite Showcase Item

The ADETA Professional Development Committee is pleased to announce that "f-Learning: A Digital Breakthrough" by Jon Baggaley has been voted "Favourite Showcase Item" in the First Annual Holiday Open House. Set in 2010, the video looks back at the early days of e-learning, m-learning, and at the exciting ultimate breakthrough, f-Learning. The Father of f-Learning, Dr. Jon Baggaley, discusses new f-L approaches and accessories with interviewer Jason Biggins. The video was based on a "Sidethoughts" article in the Fall 2004 issue of "The Distance."

The First Annual ADETA Holiday Open House was an online showcase of recent web simulations, interactivities, and virtual realities created by those on the Alberta Education scene. We were pleased to have eight great entries in this showcase. During the December Holiday season, ADETA members were given the opportunity to view the entries, then vote for their favourite showcase item in an online poll.

The ADETA Professional Development Committee would like to thank all those who submitted entries this year, and those who stopped in for a holiday visit. We hope that this is the beginning of a Holiday tradition that will grow in future years.

List of Open House Participants

Name of Showcase item	Submitted by:
'f-Learning: a digital breakthrough' (5.5 minute streaming video)	J. Baggaley, Centre for Distance Education, Athabasca University.
Math 3 Under The Sea	LearnAlberta.ca, Learning Technologies Branch, Alberta
Hess' Law Experiment	NorQuest College
The Research Proposal	Jessica Ayala
5 Band Resistor Activity (eltr 244 - Electric Circuit Analysis)	Multimedia Development Services, Centre for Instructional Technology and Development, SAIT
Letter Tone Activity (COMM 248 - Technical Communications)	Multimedia Development Services, Centre for Instructional Technology and Development, SAIT
Geo-Stationary Orbit Animation (SURV 409 - GIS Remote Sensing)	Multimedia Development Services, Centre for Instructional Technology and Development, SAIT
Parts of a Map (MAPS 420 - GIS Digital Cartography)	Multimedia Development Services,Centre for Instructional Technology and Development, SAIT

Interface 2005

www.nait.ca/interface2005

Join us at Interface 2005 in Edmonton, Alberta on June 8, 9, and 10! The theme of the conference, Juggling Learning with e's: engage, enlighten, experience, engenders a vision of adventure, innovation and daring. How well are we managing technology-mediated learning? Or are the delivery technologies managing us?

By addressing engagement, enlightenment and experience, this conference will challenge you to reflect upon:
- Media
- Learning
- Integration of electronic resources for e-learning.

This conference will be of interest to instructors, teachers, designers, developers, administrators, and support staff working with learning technologies, including professionals from the following non-profit sectors: K to 12, post secondary, government, corporate, and industrial.

Presentation Strands:

engage

Strand One: e-teaching and e-learning
- Communities of Practice
- New Roles for e-Professionals
- Technology and Pedagogy
- Faculty Readiness

Strand Two: e-design and e-learning
- Designing for Learning Management Systems
- Learning Objects
- Managing the e-learning Environment
- Accessibility Learning through Games and Simulations
- Active Learning

experience

Strand Three: e-valuating e-learning Initiatives
- Research Student Assessmnet Program
- Course Evaluation
- Alternative Infrastructure Models

Strand Four: Professional Development Career Paths
- Performance Reviews
- Professional Portfolios/e-Portfolios

Banquet on the Boat

Join us Thursday, June 9, 2005, and cruise the North Saskatchewan River on the Edmonton Queen! We are reserving the Dining Room and will have entertainment during the evening. You will enjoy a sumptuous meal and look up at one of the prettiest skylines in Alberta. Expect to juggle, laugh, be entertained, and elude the ordinary!

enlighten

Strand Five: e-merging Technologies
- Technology Showcase Weblogs
- Wikis
- Pocket PCs
- e-books
- Videoconferencing
- Smart Classrooms

Strand Six: e-bullience
- Balancing the Personal, and the Professional
- Healthy Living
- Laugh and Learn

Registration Information

Full Conference:	$275 *
Students Registration:	$165
Single-Day (June 9 or 10):	$150
Pre-Conference (full day):	$85
Pre-Conference (half day):	$55
Extra Banquet Tickets:	$50

* Register before May 6, 2005 and pay only $225 not including pre-conference workshops.

To register visit: **www.nait.ca/interface2005/register.htm**
For more registration information contact:
Lynn Ivany-McEachern
Phone: (780) 644-6089 email: lynn.ivany@norquest.ca

Interface2005 Sneak Peek Virtual Wine and Cheese Party

April, 2005

The Interface 2005 Committee and the ADETA PD Committee are preparing a treat for you in April. Keep an eye out on the ADETA listserv and website for details about this exciting preview of the Interface 2005 conference.

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Mark David Milliron

Dr. Mark David Milliron is the executive director of the Education Practice for SAS. Incorporated in 1976, SAS is the world's largest privately held software company, with nearly 10,000 employees in more than 300 offices spanning the globe.

Milliron brings to SAS a strong and varied background as an educator. He was the president and CEO of the League for Innovation in the Community College.

Milliron has a passion for exploring teaching and learning, leadership strategies, future trends and the human side of technology change. He has authored books, monographs and articles; spoken at colleges, corporations, and conferences across the country and around the world; and served as a key resource for local, state and national government programs. He serves on the board of trustees for Western Governors University (WGU), has served on the board of the American Council on Education (ACE), works closely with the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor, and sits on several other educational, non-profit and corporate boards.

His personal website - lists 75 publications Milliron has authored and co-authored 75 publications. He has delivered 148 keynotes for conferences, Institutes and events. Additionally, he has consulted and presented keynotes to the range of education institutions 118 times.

The Honourable Dave Hancock: Minister of Advanced Education

Dave Hancock was elected to his third term as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Edmonton -Whitemud on November 22, 2004. On November 25, Mr. Hancock was sworn in as the Minister of Advanced Education. In addition to his duties as an MLA and Minister, Mr. Hancock is also House Leader, a member of the Agenda and Priorities Committee, and Vice Chair of the Standing Policy Committee on Education and Employment.

Mr. Hancock was elected to his first term as a Progressive Conservative member of the Legislative Assembly on March 11, 1997 and served as Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and Deputy House Leader.

In January 1999, Mr. Hancock was appointed Government House Leader and Minister of Justice and Attorney General in May 1999.

Prior to his election to the Alberta Legislature, Mr. Hancock was a partner with Matheson and Company, Barristers and Solicitors. He received his law degree from the University of Alberta in 1979.

Mr. Hancock has played an active role in the community and various professional organizations.

Mr. Hancock was born in Fort Resolution, N.W.T., on August 10, 1955. He lived in Hazelton, B.C. and the northern Alberta community of Fort Vermilion, where he graduated from La Crete Public School. Mr. Hancock moved to Edmonton in 1972. He and his wife Janet have three children: Ian, Janis and Janine.

Steven Downes

I am a senior research officer with the National Research Council of Canada in Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada. Affiliated with the Council's Institute for Information Technology, I work with the e-Learning Research Group. My principle work involves research and development in e-learning, working with institutions and companies to improve their competitive position in the industry, and outreach through articles, seminars and workshops.

Previous to this position I was an Information Architect employed by the Faculty of Extension at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. I am employed on a contract position to design and build a major internet resource called MuniMall, a one-stop site for all components of the municipal affairs sector and municipalities in Alberta. Before working at the University of Alberta, I was employed as a Distance Education and New Instructional Media Design Specialist with Assiniboine Community College in Brandon, Manitoba, Canada. Prior to that, I taught philosophy by distance for Athabasca University. I have a BA and MA, both in philosophy, from the University of Calgary.

I read a lot of science fiction and books in general. I enjoy movies, television and sports, especially hockey.

I enjoy playing darts and NTN Trivia (though since Moncton has no NTN locations, it's a lot harder to play. I am an avid Civilization III player.

My cat, was the first feline in Manitoba to have had her own web page.

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The VASE framework has been developed to help individuals, teams and organizations to understand and address some of the challenges of working with virtual teams. It is based on over 40 years collective virtual teaming experience and some recent research and development work based at Royal Roads University in partnership with Calliope Learning. The framework has four components: (1) build and maintain a Vision, (2), check Assumptions, (3), take a Systems approach, and (4) Expect white water. Each component has an associated set of competencies and development tools.

Build and Maintain a Vision:
Building and maintaining a vision is a critical component of virtual teams. "A vision is a picture of the future you seek to create, described in the present tense, as if it were happening now" (Senge et al, 1994, p 302). The literature on teamwork both virtual and face-to-face (Henry & Hartzler, 1998; Jude-York et al., 2000) emphasizes the need a team's goal and purpose to be well understood, shared among all team members and revisited at regular intervals. This may seem like common sense but Murphy's Law tells us that where ever there are opportunities for miscommunication then we need to pay careful attention. If team members are heading in different directions then you don't really have a team.

Checking Assumptions:
While checking assumptions is a key skill for any teamwork, it becomes imperative in virtual and horizontal teamwork because so many taken for granted conditions are challenged. On virtual teams when things are not said, they do not exist. People working on virtual teams need to continually check their assumptions about the three Cs of working in virtual teams – communication, coordination and collaboration. Jude-York et al., (2000) refer to the three Cs as "the primary tasks of virtual teamwork" (p. 10). While the three Cs are not the goal of the team, they are the factors that will enable the team to reach its goal.

Taking a Systems View
"Everything affects everything else in one way or another. Whether you are aware of that or not does not change the fact that this is what is happening. This systems perspective reminds us that this is what is going on. And when you see it this way, you can manage your business better" (Woods, 2002). Within virtual teams, there are the intra-team and inter-team systems, which need to be identified and dealt with on an ongoing basis. The flexibility of time and space inherent in virtual teams can make it difficult at times to see connections to the larger intra/inter team systems. Without regular attention to the intra/inter-team system dynamics, the ability of the team to effectively and efficiently reach its goal is compromised.

Expect Whitewater
Permanent white water is a term used by Vaill (1996) to describe the complex, churning and ever-changing environment in which most of us find ourselves in our personal and professional lives. Vaill (1996) suggests, "these conditions are taking us all out of our comfort zones and asking things of us that we never imagined would be required. Permanent white water means permanent life outside one's comfort zone" (p. 14).

Most people are comfortable with some changes (i.e. in their field of expertise, with technology) but not others (i.e. organizational structural changes). However, what is needed is the development of skills to become comfortable around all sorts of changes. By not looking for stability but rather embracing and even expecting white water conditions, we need to become good learners, and, in particular, really good at being beginners.

Virtual Team Skills Inventory (VTSI)
The Virtual Team Skills Inventory (VTSI) is a multi-rater, inside/outside, team skills inventory for virtual and other types of traditional and modern teams. It is similar to 360-degree assessments in that the VTSI draws on multiple perspectives from the individual, team members and external reviewers to get a clear picture of a team's skills. To do so, the VTSI identifies the strengths and areas for improvement based on a set of competencies and related indicators derived from the VASE framework and supporting literature on team and online competencies (Goodyear et al., 2001; Salmon, 2000).

The VTSI looks at a team from both an internal and external perspective to reduce the risk of skill blind spots. It also recognizes opportunities for team learning by identifying potential coaching partners within the team. The inventory provides qualitative reports that identify the areas for growth according to the virtual team skill competencies. Although the inventory has been created with virtual teams in mind, it is just as applicable to all types of traditional and modern teams.

Traditional 360-degree assessments suffer from two particular drawbacks that the VTSI addresses.

- In the VTSI raters are only asked to give feedback in areas that they know about. Traditional 360s ask for all raters to answer the same multi-choice questions.
- In the VTSI feedback is provided in a qualitative form that lists a ratees specific strengths and areas for improvement based on the competencies selected. Traditional 360s provide quantitative feedback that is out of context, difficult to make meaning from and not always geared towards the development of action strategies (Johnson, 2004).

Conclusion
Working in virtual teams is an iterative job and one that requires the participation of each virtual team member. Team process needs to be attended to on a regular basis in order for progress on the team task to benefit from virtual teaming. The VASE framework and the VTSI tool introduced in this article are two ways in which virtual teams can identify, develop and hone their virtual team skills on an ongoing basis in a sustainable manner.

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Habitat for Humanity: 2004 Jimmy Carter Work Project

Jennifer Semchuk

Jimmy Carter's a mensch.*

He's a bit stooped, and his hair's grey, but his grin is as vibrant as ever and so is his commitment to providing decent, affordable housing to people worldwide.

The last week of October 2004, 18 of us travel from Edmonton to Veracruz where we join 2000 other volunteers from all over the world. Our mission? To build seventy-five 700-square foot homes — erect the inner and outer walls, install the windows and doors, and raise the roof. We have five days.

Up at 6, on the bus by 7, reach the build at 7:30, bolt down some burritos and coffee, and head out into a 35°C – 40°C day to measure, saw, lift, place, mortar, scrape, and sand cement blocks. I would never imagine so many things could be done to a cement block. Take a water break and note, with amazement, that the walls have sprung up another foot or 2 since we last looked. Habitat bandanas are handed out. We soak them in ice water and gratefully plaster our heads. Ten minutes later, someone notices that the red dye is running down our faces. We look like we're bleeding; maybe we are.

Board member Leona Dvorak pushes Sandi Barber around

Jennifer hard at work on JCWP

Jimmy Carter works alongside us, wandering about watching the build progress, eating with us, and just generally hanging out. People say, "Did you see Jimmy? He was here 5 minutes ago."

Day 3: Windows and doors are being shimmed into position. I see Virginia, our homeowner, quietly brush away a tear as many hands hoist the lintel up and into place. For the roof, we move closer to the sun and the blazing blue sky that's unmarred by any little WHMIS clouds. People plummet from ladders and scaffolds, whack their heads on jutting metal, pass out from dehydration, and inhale drifts of concrete dust. They rest a bit in the first aid tent, drink some water, and go back to work.

On Friday afternoon, we gather at the food tent for the closing ceremonies. By now, we're a bandaged, limping, sunburned lot, and it's a treat to enter the shade and sink into a chair. We listen to several long speeches. Finally, Jimmy takes the podium and, in Spanish, basically says, "Good. But some houses aren't finished, and it's only 3:30. Let's get back to work."

So we do. The sun is very low when we put down our tools and walk through the house one last time. On the threshold, we embrace the homeowners and bid them farewell. As we walk toward the bus, we look back at the outline of the newly erected roofs slanting against the sunset.

Few sights have ever been so satisfying.

*A person of integrity and honour

To view the NAIT team's photos, go to: www.nait.ab.ca/habitat - select *NAIT Build Team*

Elluminating Professional Development: "Blogs in Education: Opportunities and Challenges" Presented by Scott Leslie

The ADETA Professional Development Committee is pleased to announce its first Monthly PD session delivered using Elluminate Live! was held on January 27th, 2005. The session focused on the growing online phenomenon of weblogs or "blogs" and was presented by Scott Leslie. Scott is the Manager of the Learning Resource Centre for BCcampus, a learning object repository, and is also the researcher on the Edutools CMS comparison site. He publishes the educational technology blog EdTechPost and has led a number of previous workshops with faculty on the uses of blogs in education.

In the presentation, Scott clarified what exactly a blog is and is not for those new to using this online tool. He then focused on a "Matrix of Blog Uses in Education," an examination of how blogs are currently used in the classroom by instructors and students, as both authors and readers of blogs. Scott also discussed how blogs compare to other online tools, such as full Course Management Systems and Threaded discussion boards. In this comparison, Scott illustrated appropriate and effective uses of blogs in education, and identified where they fit into the arsenal of other online educational tools.

You can view a recorded version Scott's session by going to the ADETA Elluminate Live! web page: http://vclass01.edu.norquest.ca/ADETA.htm

From there follow the link to "View a recorded ADETA PD session," then click on the "BlogsinEducation" link.

Out of School Programming for School Age Children:

Supporting Development for Children Aged 6-12 years

Samantha Lenci

Over the past 7 years, Bow Valley College (BVC) has provided courses for school-age professionals to increase their skill level, enhance their knowledge of child development, and develop their abilities to provide quality programs for children aged 6-12 years. Last year the Learning Ministry of Alberta approved Bow Valley College's Certificate in Programming for School Age Children. This comprehensive 10-course program was created to address the increasing demand for qualified entry-level child care workers. This program was designed for those individuals who work or wish to work in school-age programs, recreation, community centres, youth programs, church groups, and summer camps.

While offering the courses face to face at the main campus in Calgary, Bow Valley College was approached to be a participant in eCampus Alberta. With this opportunity to expand the program, BVC set about designing the courses for an on-line environment. All 10 courses are now offered in this format for professionals to participate in across Alberta. The program includes the following courses:

- Introduction to Out of School Programming – Focuses on the goals and essential components of quality programs for school-age children
- Child and Adolescent Growth and Development – Focuses on the growth and development of children from birth to early adolescence
- Out of School Programming I (5 to 9 year olds) – Focuses on the creation of developmentally appropriate programs for children in this age group
- Out of School Programming II (9-14 year olds) - Focuses on the creation of developmentally appropriate programs for children in this age group
- Developing Family, School, and Community Relations – Focuses on building skills for working with adults in the school-age child's life, which include the school, parents, and the community
- Interpersonal Relationships and Communications Skills – Focuses on the development of skills to successfully relate to others on a personal, social, and professional basis
- Inclusive Programming for School Age Children with Special Needs – Focuses on children with varying abilities and diagnosed disabilities and how to provide a successful integration process for all children
- Leadership and Organizational Skills – Focuses on learning the organizational and leadership styles necessary for effective management of out of school programs
- Fundamentals for Written Communication – Focuses on the fundamentals of writing to enhance work related written communication skills

- Recreation and Healthy Living – Focuses on how recreation and healthy living can impact the development of children
- Practicum – Focuses on the application of skills learned throughout the 9 courses in a school age setting under the supervision of a practicum instructor

Each course was built on the following components of quality School Age Programs that include a need to foster the self-development, self-esteem, and self-care skills of children. Opportunities for children to develop, enhance, and practice interpersonal skills and build successful relationships. Encouragement for independence and exploration of the environment while contributing to the establishment of rules and consequences. Provide program material that promote cultural diversity and allows children to celebrate in their own unique way. Finally, how to design developmentally appropriate activities that meet the needs of the school-age children, their families, and the community.
Along with the components, each course focuses on the unique developmental needs of school-age children, which include their social, emotional, cognitive, physical, moral, and peer relationships. These needs change radically during the school-age years and the focus on peer relationships, intrinsic motivation, and self-reliance become paramount.

The desired outcomes of the School-Age Certificate Program at BVC is to strive to provide qualified staff who can design developmentally appropriate programs that recognize the need for appropriate activities, opportunities, rules, and consequences which enable children to increase their self-efficacy, self-esteem, and personal development. Throughout the courses students are encouraged to understand the unique nature of school-age children and how facilitating the process, rather than planning it all, helps children establish mature expressions and experiences.

Samantha has a background in early childhood education and community rehabilitation and has worked with children and families for over 15 years both in Canada and the Untied States

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The following developmental perspective, by Eller, C.L., & Mulroy, M.T. (1993), provided course designers with multiple insights into school age children's development.

Young School-age:
Experimentation is the key to successful activities. Let them use their bodies, ideas and materials in new and different ways. There is no right or wrong way.

Experience and not a finished product is what is important to this age group.

Incorporate fantasy, pretend and dramatic play in as many aspects of an activity as possible.

Emphasize the use of the senses. Activities that require them to use their ears, eyes, nose, mouth and skin are right on target! Think about combining two or more senses.

Activities that reenact the routines and events of their known world (home and school) will be sought and enjoyed.

Fostering friendship skills of sharing, helping, taking turns and working with another person are very appropriate.

Finding appropriate ways of channeling emotions and their behavioral expression are necessary and important. Help children to use words rather than actions to express their feelings.

Children learn who they are via what they can do! Help them see how far they have come since they were preschoolers, and show them what they have to look forward to as they continue to grow and learn.

Older School-age:
Coordinating and combining well-learned skills and abilities into new routines and rule regulated activities is of interest to this group. This age child places great emphasis on precision and perfecting.

Completed projects, finished products, works of art are core issues. They enjoy seeing other "artists" or "scientists" working and sharing "tips of the trade."

The imagination is channeled into adult expressions such as making documentaries, poetry or short story writing. These children are ready to take a script and make it come alive via acting, directing and scenery construction.

Emotional responses to sensory stimulation are very typical. They respond to the beauty of images, words, movements, etc. It is not unusual for them to "cry for no reason." Also be ready for experimental behavior to enhance sensory stimulation, i.e. drug and alcohol use.

Global awareness and interest in people from around the world are of great interest.

Having a best friend and being part of a group are key concerns. They welcome opportunities that help them meet members of the opposite sex. They enjoy administering surveys and collecting data that puts them in touch with the ideas and attitudes of their contemporaries.

Finding different ways of expressing feelings and ideas is of great interest. Exposure to poetry, dance, art and communications training as alternate means of expression is a good idea.

Interest in the physical self tends to be the primary focus of this age group. It is, however, important that they see themselves as being social, emotional and intellectual beings. Meeting men and women from a wide variety of careers and backgrounds is a great way of seeing the possibilities that reside within themselves.

Middle School-age:
Skill development is most important. Learning how to use "real" tools, equipment and materials is of great importance. They want time to practice new skills but don't want to get bogged down with rules.

Although interested in making and doing "real" things, they are not interested in making masterpieces or in perfecting skills.

Need to use "real" toys in their play and are apt to include all sorts of sound effects while involved in play. They enjoy involving others in their play and are able to "go with the flow" of changing ideas and input.

Learning about how we sense rather than the actual sensations is more interesting. They enjoy models, diagrams and experiments involving the human body and its functions.

Who, What, When, Where and Why are the questions this group thinks are important. They are eager to translate newly-acquired information into stories, articles and trivia games to be shared with family and friends.

Friendship groups are formed around common interests. It is not unusual for them to have "secret" handshakes, passwords and languages. Any activity that teaches a new or "out of the ordinary" skill will be a hit. Be ready for in/out group fighting and "pecking order" arguments.

This group likes to think that they are really "cool" and don't have emotions! They will dare and double dare each other to prove their coolness. They need assistance in recognizing the appropriateness of feelings and in finding ways to verbally express concerns, fears and affections.

These children need to learn about who they are and what they can do by interacting with their peers. They need to see that each person in their group has important information and experiences to share and that they can retain their identity while still being part of a group.

The Public Virtual Forum: Alberta Supernet Research Alliance

Jennifer Lee Geary

Abstract. One of my primary purposes for developing this paper is to raise key factors such as computer-mediated communication, the Internet, social relationships and online conferences that are pertinent to the role of the Public Forum of the Alberta Supernet Research Alliance, Canada. The Forum is a strategic solution to develop public consultation between researchers with the Alliance, national and international communities and the public. I am a member of the Alberta Supernet and it combines comprehensive networks with an innovative use of computing power to provide necessary supports to Albertans. The Supernet advances the roles of telecommunication networks to provide business, ehealth, disaster and emergency relief and library services.

As researchers, we know firsthand the challenges involved in obtaining reliable funding to develop sustainable research activities and to disseminate information to our peers and the public. I anticipate that this paper may serve as a cognitive map to chart formal strategies, procedures and processes to inform interdisciplinary teamwork as described by the Harvard Business School (2002, p.7). For the purposes of this paper computer-mediated communication is defined as being a form of text- based dialogue that may provide a safe space for discussion that is almost independent of time and place. Communication in online conferences may consist of reciprocal and interlinked messages. Fahy (2002a, p. 5) and Stamm (1999bc, p. 184) suggest that computer-mediated communication also includes email, message boards, online conferences, chat, file exchanges and instant messaging. Stamm (1999bc, pp. 188-191) refers to the strengths of email in the area of supervision, training and support. Message boards that are hosted on Web sites can be used to facilitate discussion, debate and enquiries between researchers and the public. Denton (1996, p. 6) and Harrison (1996, p.553) warn that inadequate and inappropriate information within any communication system may lead to cognitive distortions, mistrust and entropy which may damage interpersonal relationships. Researchers and the public need to be able to communicate with each other regularly and effectively and well-integrated communication systems can help to coordinate interdisciplinary teamwork.

1. Computer-mediated Communication

The benefits of computer-mediated communication that is moderated and structured by skilled professionals may be many. Fahy (2002b, pp. 3-4) suggests that computer-mediated communication can be a conduit to the development of social, cognitive and interpersonal relationships and Annand and Haughey (1997, p. 1) see that it can provide diverse groups of professionals with opportunities to enter into discourse with each other. Computer-mediated communication helps to connect researchers and the public who are isolated by time and geographical location. Fahy (2003, p. 3) suggests that distance education potentially provides a supportive environment where researchers can learn from their peers and where peers can learn from others. James and Gilliland (2000, p. 666) refer to the benefits to researchers of debriefing with peers. For example, virtual learning communities (communities of practice) may allow researchers to connect with their peers and to have private conversations with individuals in whom they trust. The benefits of virtual communities have been noted in distance education and Fahy, Crawford and Ally (2001, p. 1) note that the only ways in which some researchers may interact at a distance is through online conferences.

Computer- mediated communication is a tool that has been applied extensively in distance education and training. Some proponents of distance education suggest that it is more cost effective than face-to-face pedagogy. Rumble (1987, p.72) mentions that academics and the public have taken a number of positions on the cost-benefit value of distance education. For example, Rumble (2000, p.2) mentions that some critics believe that communications technology consumes too many resources. Fahy (2001a) refers to Bates (1995, pp. 39-40) who has studied trends associated with the costs of and expectations for the impact of computer technologies on learning outcomes and estimates that computer assisted learning production and delivery costs are 20 to 100 times greater than the same costs for a face-to-face lecture. Visser (2000, p. 30) suggests that the development time needed to design a distance education course may well be resource intensive. Alternately, other proponents of distance education suggest that technology is less expensive than conventional, labour-intensive methods in tutoring and student support. For example, Rumble (1989, p. 99) asserts that distance education is well regarded by the State and that it is cost effective. Keegan (1996, p. 182) agrees that distance education can be more cost effective than face-to-face teaching and DiBiase (2000) mentions research that he was involved did not indicate that distance education requires more effort than traditional teaching.

2. The Internet and Social Relationships

Through the Internet and other distance technologies social relationships may develop although they may take longer to be created than may be the case in face-to-face situations. For example, Stein, Garber and Baggaley (2003, p. 1) suggest that online conferences may connect participants in real time or asynchronously. Asynchronous communication does not occur in real time and contributions to the "conversation' can take place almost any time and anywhere. McFadden and Jencius (2000, p. 78) mention that asynchronous communication is developed through making information available to multiple "end users" to make comments that may

be stored on the Internet. Computer-mediated communication can provide a tool to document and to understand the multiple views of many participants (Fahy 2003, p. 5), lessening the pressure on participants to conform to the views of the majority because of the physical separation of members and the time lag between contributions. This means that computer-mediated communication and the establishment of virtual communities can be of instrumental value in facilitating conversations about the sensitive aspects that are involved with conducting research about the Supernet. For instance, some individuals may prefer to have time to reflect upon texts and to delay their response to the communications of others. Peterson (2000, p. 144) notes that one benefit of asynchronous communication is that dialogue can occur between parties who do not have face-to-face interaction in real time.

Some researchers and members of the public seem to be "technophobes" whereas others, on the more extreme end of the pendulum, may be "technological determinists". Technologies may have their applications with some individuals and groups and not address the needs of all "end users". When public consultation through the Internet is developed, time spent by researchers on these enterprises may be less than is the case with traditional face-to-face interaction. Much topical discussion in academic communities seems to have centred on the effectiveness of face-to-face learning as opposed to distance education. Researchers may need to help "end users" to be self-determining so they are in a better position to choose between competing options to remain informed about developments with the Supernet. Bernard and Goodyear (1992, p. 59) suggest that ideally "end users" can chose between options and apply the most suitable solutions for idiosyncratic challenges they may be experiencing. Perhaps rather than focusing on debates between the efficacies of distance versus online technologies researchers could recognise that each approach has its application. Nonetheless, some individuals may not be able to access information, training and education about the Supernet in any way other than online. Shale (1988, p. 26) and Taylor, Lopez and Quadrelli (1996, p. 6) suggest that a major benefit of distance education is that "end users" may not need to be confined to campuses to learn about developments with the Supernet.

3. Online Conferences

Online conferences may consist of individuals and groups who together form an alliance such as that involved with the Supernet. To develop online conferences it seems to be important for researchers to have opportunities to interact with each other and the public and the time available to create human networks. Researchers derive support from their peers to fulfill specific tasks and to learn collaboratively at a distance. Fahy (2001b, p. 9; 2003, pp. 1-2) indicates that computer-mediated communication can assist individuals to develop a perceptual, social and educational presence. Virtual communities and online support systems may help professionals to connect with their peers in other countries and in other time zones. Stamm (1999bc, p. 180) and Terry (1999, p. 171) both suggest that because of challenges associated with space and time there is a role for computer-mediated communication to develop virtual communities.

The elements that contribute to successful online conferences such as sustainable communications may not be well known. Fahy, Crawford and Ally (2001, pp. 2, 11) suggest that there appears to be a gap in the literature about what processes and structures contribute to successful online conferences. For example, in a study of a fifteen -week graduate course at Athabasca University, Fahy, Crawford and Ally (2001, p. 8) found that some participants are persistent in their communications with their peers. Fahy (2002a, p. 21) suggests that participants who are committed to online conferences may be more likely to sustain their virtual presence with their peers rather than to make repeated entries only to leave the group. Persistent participants may interact with others over a prolonged period and may be caring towards their peers. Fahy (2002a, p. 7) has noted differences in the communication styles between women and men. Women tend to be more interpersonal and to weave together messages made by other participants generated through online conferences. Men may develop messages that appear to have more factual than interpersonal content. Fahy (2002a, p. 25) mentions that as women become more confident with online conferences they develop a more professional style to their communications, although Fahy (2001b, p17) is not suggesting that gender predetermines the manner in which participants will behave in online conferences. Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava and John (2004, p. 96) mention that men and women are now equally represented in the ranks of "end users" associated with the Internet.

Fahy (2001b, p. 4) indicates that computer-mediated communication is not deficient in comparison to speech but rather it may help to build social connectedness between professionals who may live in different time zones. There can be cultural, personal and social factors that can contribute to emotional and cultural distances in interpersonal relationships and Fahy (2003) mentions, "Indeed face-to-face interaction may also suffer from various [distances] (psychological, interpersonal, cultural, linguistic, environmental, etc), while anyone who has ever had a pen pal or been caught up in an online relationship, knows the power of [mere] asynchronous text to create and sustain interpersonal engagement." (p.8)
Computer -mediated communication and online conferences are tools to facilitate consultation between researchers and the public in Alberta, Canada and in international communities. At the end of the day the way in which messages are generated and interpreted may go beyond the social and personal construction of gender.

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When readers codify information they may do so as positioned beings that are shaped by life situations and experiences as well as by gender, although Bernard and Goodyear (1992, pp. 46 - 49) emphasise that supervisors and supervisees ought to be aware that experiences associated with gender can impact upon their practices. Fahy (2002a, p. 6) suggests that the success or otherwise of online conferences may be related to the expectations that individuals bring with them when they communicate with each other about the tasks that are set for the group and Bernard and Goodyear (1998, p. 61) note that groups may develop particular flows, chronological orders of events and "content". Smith (1988, p. 10) adds that the size, intricacy, resources, histories and philosophies that comprise a group may have a bearing upon the success or otherwise of organisations. Smith's (1988) work would seem to be relevant to the study of online conferences and the development of human relationships.

4. Concluding Comments

It is essential to build innovative practices associated with the Supernet and more broadly communication systems to attract knowledge workers. At times, these workers may need to work independently from their peers. There is also merit in workers collaborating to add value to existing research associated with the Supernet. Technological, social, cultural, economic, financial and political change is inevitable in knowledge economies. Change may be multi-modal and technological change may need to be tempered by social and ethical factors. For example, Saunders (1997) mentions that social and economic principles will need to be balanced to develop global market places. Professionals can be interlinked through international networks and it was partly with this in mind that I undertook strategic and international analysis of the data in this study. Walker and Marr (2001, p. 73) mention that it is important to balance profits and principles to facilitate sustainable development. Technologies are influencing economic and social realities at global levels. Saunders (1997) refers to Reich's work in stating - "The key feature of current economic development is globalization, a situation described by the U.S. Secretary for Labour, Robert Reich, as one in which factors of production move effortlessly across borders as corporations and investors scour the world for profitable opportunities, becoming in the process disconnected from their home nations (Reich, 1993, p. 8)" (p.1)

Many researchers recognise that they live in international communities and these consist of interlinked and at times contrasting systems. The reality of globalization continues to have an impact upon economies in Western societies. Not all researchers and the public will benefit from relationships that are developed through technologies that have been developed through the Supernet but for many the "connectivity" that is afforded by the Internet may also enhance their interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. Fahy (2002a, pp. 5 - 6) suggests that computer-mediated communication helps some individuals to overcome distance by developing what he calls "hyper personal interrelationships". The Supernet is a potential tool to develop interpersonal relationships between some professionals and the broader communities in which they live thus developing knowledge communities throughout Canada. Stamm (1999a, p. xii; 1999b, p. 179) mentions that virtual communities can help to create social networks where professionals can gain peer support and notes that with the advent of technologies they are more cost effective than was the case in 1995.

Obviously, it is those technologies that are tested and that are consistent with the mission, vision and objectives of stakeholder groups with the Alberta Supernet that should be applied by researchers and the public. Casey (2000, p. 18) and Peterson (2000, p. 143) refer to the need to manage Internet tools prudently, because if high technology processes are not applied wisely the upgrade costs for such innovations may be significant. Researchers will need to exercise caution in their selection of technologies so as not to purchase highly sophisticated technologies of questionable quality (Naglieri, Drasgow, Schmit, Handler, Prifitera, Margolis and Vleasquez, p. 160). Fahy (1998) and Materi and Fahy (2004, p. 2) refer to the need to plan the manner in which technology will be applied. Naisbitt and Philips (2001) are concerned that the application of technologies can develop a damaging cycle where frequent upgrades are required to lessen obsolescence. Naisbitt and Philips (2002) found that, "But like the Siren's song the call of technology can be deceiving. It lures, then ensnares" (p. 36). As emerging technologies become available on the market some professionals may need to abandon high tech instruments of the past. Fahy (2002a, p. 20) mentions that tools for communicating online need to be refined as bandwidth increases. Fahy (1998) suggests that distance educators may have become interested in the role of high tech as a means to cut the costs involved with the development of educational services but that in the end, distance education may not be more cost effective than face-to-face instruction and its other benefits need to be emphasised.

5. Key Recommendations

2.1 Fahy, Crawford and Ally (2001, p. 3) suggest that to keep pace with multiplex networks it is important for researchers and the public to become familiar with the characteristics and processes associated with electronic communication.

2.2 It is essential to build on the body of research that has arisen through distance learning organisations and individuals who develop networked virtual communities. Virtual learning communities draw upon distance technologies to support stakeholder groups (researchers, professionals, the public, businesses) to receive education and training from their peers, vocational and academic institutions.

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Instructional Designers as Agents of Social Change

Katy Campbell

As an instructional designer by "chart and chance", I've worked as a designer in the post-secondary sector since 1983. I've been support staff and dismissed as "just a techie"; a research associate and dismissed as "just an assistant"; a new professor and dismissed as "naïve about the role of academics"; a distance educator and dismissed as "a cultural imperialist, a management pawn, and a techie" depending on the speaker (respectively a First Nation's community, instructor, or management); and a designer/Director/academic who is just plain dismissed because I "don't teach". Meaning of course, I don't lecture in a physical classroom with rows of desks and real students.

In fact, dismissal is an experience shared by every single instructional designer that we have talked to in our 3-year study of instructional designers in higher education. It doesn't seem to matter whether we have credentials to burn, decades of experience, academic, professional, or support appointments; a rich teaching background….. And yet, every single designer speaks of commitment and passion in their work and in the effect they can have on teaching and learning in their institutions.

With the support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Richard Schwier, University of Saskatchewan; Rick Kenny, Athabasca University; and I have been talking to instructional designers --two dozen of them (us)-- over the past 3 years and asking them to tell us their stories of practice. We think of these as collaborative conversations because we share our own stories and are beginning to build a shared understanding of who we are, why we choose design as a (a)vocation, when we knew what instructional design was and could be, what we care about, and how we work with our clients and colleagues to influence the culture of our institutions and how they support learning. We have had over 50 conversations now and here are some of our observations:

- We are more than craftspeople or technicians or even scientists; we are critical and creative problem-solvers in the "messy swamp" of teaching and learning
- As we gain experience we define ourselves less by tasks to be accomplished and more by relational goals such as "transforming teaching practice"
- We practice design based on our own core values
- We often see instructional design as a strategy for change, for example as professional development for instructors
- Although as experts we talk about "intuition", we are evidence-based. One designer talked about "flow"
- Instructional design is a conversation-based practice
- We are critically reflective of our own work and seek opportunities to continuously learn
- We are not sure if we are a profession; consequently we do not know how to represent our domain to others. We are searching for an identity.
- Relationships are critical to us and are reflected in the quality of the experience for, and the impact on, our instructor-clients
- Traditional forms of instructional technology research have not revealed or acknowledged what designers really do and how they really work
- We develop our own communities of practice but are not sure if a professional community of practice exists
- We feel marginalized and must work hard to establish our "moral authority" in contexts that value the PhD as the only acceptable authority
- We encounter and resolve ethical dilemmas quite regularly
- Many of us have a social or political mission, for example, "to increase access to anyone who wants to learn, not just middle-class urbanites"
- We have had significant influence, especially at the personal level, on the learner's experience in HE

Rick, Rick and I are finding this study so empowering that we have to pinch ourselves when we remember that it is actually research work for which someone (you, the taxpayer) is paying dearly. We would love to talk with you! We have a temporary blog, are building an online community site, have presented this work at many conferences and are starting to publish it internationally. Please contact any one of us to participate or to learn more.

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Assistive Technology: It's at Your Fingertips

Susan D. Moisey

In Canada, adaptations and accommodations for people with disabilities began to appear shortly after World War II, when large numbers of veterans returned home, some with lost limbs or other mobility or sensory losses. Although attention had been paid to people with disabilities prior to that time, it was during the 1950s and 1960s when special training and assistive technology for people with disabilities began in earnest. In schools, special education classrooms appeared. In public buildings and areas, architecture and city planning changed to accommodate the needs of the less able bodied. Impressive stairways and narrow hallways made way to more accessible design features.

There is a saying – "Accessible design is good design." Accessible design is design that works for everyone. If you look around, you can examples of accommodations for people with disabilities that work equally as well for those without disabilities. Consider curb cuts on sidewalks and ramps on buildings, for example. Originally built for people in wheelchairs, they work equally as well for bicyclists and parents pushing strollers.

The same is true of computers. Did you that there are electronic "curb-cuts" on your computer?

Take a look at the operating system of your computer. Windows contains many accessibility features that are largely unrecognized. If you open the Control Panel, you will find an icon called "Accessibility Options." Open it up and you will see the following choices:

- Keyboard – Sticky keys, filter keys, and toggle keys -- Sticky keys avoid having to press two keys at the same time; rather they can be pressed one after the other. This feature is great for "hunt and peck" typists or, if you are like me, one-handed typists. For example, to make a capital "A," press the Shift key and then press the "a." A capital "A" is the result.

The Filter key function is good for people with tremors who are likely to press a key repeatedly.
If you turn on the Toggle key function, you will hear a sound when you press the CapsLock or NumLock key. This helps to avoid mistakes.

- Sound–Sound Sentry, and Show sounds – These features are for users with hearing loss; they substitute words or flashing signals for sound prompts or warnings.
- Display – High contrast -- For users with visual problems, this feature allows a higher contrast screen display, for example, white on black.
- Mouse –Mouse keys -- for users who can't use a mouse, this feature allows the cursor to be moved with the arrow keys

(Note: Similar features are found on MacIntosh computers.)

More accessibility features can be found within the Mouse and Display buttons on the Control Panel. For example, the mouse can be calibrated so it is slower, or the cursor or arrow can be made larger. The screen display can be changed with different or larger fonts to assist those who don't see clearly.

Windows 2000 and Windows XP also include an Accessibility Wizard, which steps the user through a question-and-answer process, asking about physical or sensory limitations, and making changes to computer operations as a result. In addition, both have an on-screen keyboard, and Windows XP provides speech-to-text functions, allowing voice input.

Beyond adjusting the operating system to make the computer as easy to use as possible, assistive software is available to help people with disabilities make computer operations easier. Some of this software is described below.

Assistive Software

Speech-to-text – Speech-to-text software allows the user to enter text by simply speaking and to operate the computer by voice commands only. This type of assistive software is suitable for individuals who have difficulty using a keyboard. – Software such as Dragon NaturallySpeaking or Via Voice provide speech-to-text input.

Text to speech – Text-to-speech software provides assistance for users who have difficulty understanding text, such as those with low reading ability or reading comprehension problems. Students with learning disabilities often find that this type of assistive software contributes to more effective learning.

Software such as Read & Write (by Texthelp) and Kurzweil provide assistance for users who have low reading ability or reading comprehension problems. Kursweil also comes in a version that includes scanning and optical character recognition (OCR) capabilities in order to convert books and other printed materials to speech.

Screen reading and magnification software -- Users with significant vision loss or blindness can they assisted by products such as Jaws, which provides text-to-speech capabilities in addition to assistance with screen navigation. Zoomtext is a magnification program that enlarges text, and provides text-to-speech functions as well.

Assistive hardware may also help to overcome barriers and enhance access. Numerous input devices are available to assist with computer operations. For example, individuals who have difficulty typing may benefit from a smaller keyboard or one with larger, more prominently labeled keys. As an alternative to a mouse, some people find a trackball or a joystick easier to use. Many of these devices come with pre-programmed keys to allow the user direct access to frequently used programs thus saving keystrokes.

In Canada, the Aroga Corporation is a source of assistive hardware and other products to support people with disabilities. Their online catalogue is found at **www.aroga.com**

Updates from the field

BVC supports vast collection of projects and resourses

Moira Fields

Bow Valley College continues to offer many ways to learn. Some exciting and innovative courses and programs aimed at staff as well as learners are making their presences known.

Russ Wilde, an instructional designer in the Learning Resource Services, is working on a new project for Elizabeth Marko in Career Connection, the career and employment assistance services. The project's aim is to develop facilitated e-learning seminars for learners with very basic computer skills which help upgrade their computer skills for the job search. These seminars use RoboDemo animations embedded within PowerPoint slides to introduce the basics of MS Word and the Windows operating system to a variety of clients. Emily Nielson, Distributed Learning Support, created the media within these seminars.

Another project that Russ is overseeing is the development of online courses in the new online Office Assistant Certificate Program, in consultation with Catherine Bruce, Coordinator, Business and Industry. Bow Valley College is partnering with Lethbridge Community College, Norquest College, Red Deer College, Keyano College and NAIT to develop this program to be offered through eCampusAlberta. Bow Valley College will provide the accreditation for this program.

Karen Fiege, another instructional designer on our team, is working alongside Nina Goodman of Academic Foundations on an exciting new project for Basic Education. An advisory committee was convened to provide content-related input into the curriculum development process. The committee includes Leonor Hong, Zoria Rutherford, Susan Jolliffe, Fran Murphy, Glenda Kittler and Jean Edmonson. Karen will manage the development of 6 course units, which will serve as keys to furthering viewing, speaking and listening skills. The 6 units include a Canada Unit, Currents Events Unit, Interpretation Unit, Technical Unit, Visualization Unit and Vocabulary Unit. The course will provide learning activities that incorporate various delivery methods including group work and debate to improve critical thinking, synthesis of information, and expressiveness. Learners preparing to take high school courses and who want to utilize existing skills and acquire new skills will take this course.

In consultation with Moira Fields, Professional Development Officer, Laurel Madro, English as a Second Language Instructor, and Robin Houston-Knopff, Coordinator, Academic Foundations, Karen was able to manage the development and evaluation of the Essential Skills Integration course. Darlene MacDonald, Instructional Support, completed the production. The aim of this course is to provide strategies for facilitators to integrate workplace essential skills into their existing curriculum. This course is comprised of an online pre-course module and two modules delivered face-to-face. The online pre-course provides an overview of Essential Skills and an introduction to the history, process and integration of the essential skills into existing curriculum while the face-to-face modules provides hands-on training, group work and activities. Based on the feedback received to date, Moira and Laurel successfully piloted this course in August 2004 to a group of BVC faculty members. Since that time, this course has been delivered to Calgary Board of Education ESL teachers and will also be delivered to interested Bow Valley College's internal and external facilitators in January 2005 and to staff at Aurora College in Hay River, Alberta.

Darcy Rollack is the instructional designer overseeing technical development of the BWESO (Basic Workplace Essential Skills Online) project. BWESO presents workplace essential skills to people seeking employment or advancement. The project is moving forward with training of facilitators in January followed by the Pilot for students in mid February to early April.

Darcy also managed the development of the new Out of School Programming for School Age Children for Health and Community Care in consultation with Doug Scotney, Program Development, and Irene Pullar, Alternative Learning Centre Associate. Subject matter expertise was provided by a wide variety of professionals working in the field. The program focuses on the training of staff who work in the Out Of School Care programs for school age children. Also on this project team, were Chuck Shobe (Instructional Designer), Téo Adams (Web design and development) and Patricia Ricafort (graphic design and development). This entire program is being offered through eCampusAlberta. The Online Launch for this program on January 27 featured a virtual ribbon cutting by Anna Kae Todd, Vice-President, Learning and a demo of the online OSP Courses. Several notables attended, including the program's Advisory Committee as well as Tricia Donovan, Chief Operating Officer, eCampusAlberta.

Professional Development has teamed up with Human Resources at Bow Valley College to develop a new staff Mentoring Program. The Mentoring Program promotes an outcome-based approach to employee skills development. Its goal is to support skill development and acclimatize new employees with the measurable outcome that the mentee gains skills in educational or administrative support. A communication component of the mentoring program will be online for the pilot program that has matched 13 mentoring pairs. It will include discussions, resources, and chats to support the mentors and mentees. Moira Fields, PD Officer and Debbie Bruckner, Manager, Human Resources, are coordinating this program.

The Bow Valley College E-Learning Library is another professional development resource. Employees can take advantage of this lifelong learning opportunity by using the 85 online courses. More user-friendly passwords and a link to the Professional Development Open Learning Community is making this resource even more accessible to staff learners in March.

When there is a learning need within the community, Bow Valley College develops learning resources and innovative delivery methods to meet that need, whether for internal usage or for a more general audience.

Technology Enhanced Learning Team has numerous projects on the go

Patti Dyjur and Natalia Toroshenko

The Technology Enhanced Learning Team (TELT) has been very busy with the following ongoing and new projects:

Bachelor of Applied Business: Emergency Services
We continue to develop modules for this online, applied degree program for emergency services administrators. Approximately 70 students from Victoria to St. John's are enrolled in this popular new program. Recently developed modules include Emergency Preparedness & Response, Resource Management, Statistics for Administrators, Emergency Services Administration Planning & Policy, and Strategic Business Planning. Modules already developed include Accounting Principles, Financial Statement Analysis, Capital Budgeting, Interpersonal Communications, Crisis Communications, Human Resource Management, Emergency Services Management, Organizational Behaviour, and Team Leadership and Development.

4-H Online Horse Bowl
Alberta Equine 4-H club members from all over the province have the opportunity to take part in the first Online 4-H Horse Bowl Tournament. Working in collaboration with Janet Kerr, 4-H Specialist, Lakeland College will host the timed tournament for junior, intermediate and senior level 4-H Equine club members on Feb. 5 – 6, and Feb. 26 – 27. Prizes from the Alberta Equestrian Federation and Lakeland College will be awarded to the participants with the highest two-round scores. The winners will receive their prizes at Lakeland College's Little Royal annual open house and rodeo, on March 18 – 19, 2005.

eCampusAlberta
Two courses that TELT has been working on in collaboration with the School of Agriculture are ready for eCampusAlberta. Agricultural Bookkeeping (AE106) and Agricultural Math (MA100) have been piloted on campus, and revised for online delivery.

TELTis also developing an online rubric of quality assurance standards for online courses, which eCA consortium members can use to evaluate the readiness of courses for online delivery. This linked document will also direct faculty to online sources of information for course development.

Faculty Orientation and Support Online
Our faculty support web site is up and running! Check it out at http://tlm.lakelandc.ab.ca/facultyweb
Faculty members have identified needs and contributed ideas for pages that are still under construction.

Online Farm Succession Planning : Workshop for Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
TELT has been busy developing an online workshop for professionals who work with farm families in the succession process. Previously offered as a one-day, face-to-face event, the online workshop consists of six nonlinear modules that registrants can access at their convenience over a period of three weeks. A case study of a typical farm family ties all the modules together.

Fire Service Instructor: Professional Qualifications
TELT continues to develop modules for fire etc., Lakeland College's fire emergency training centre. The Professional Fire Service Instructor program NFPA 1041 certifies members of the fire service in areas such as program management, instructional development, instructional delivery, and evaluation. The first qualification level will soon be at the pilot testing stage; two levels remain to be developed.

Emergency Medical Responder Program
TELT is working with faculty in the School of Health and Human Services to develop a course that meets the qualifications for Emergency Medical Responder. The modules making up the theory portion of this program are being developed for interactive online delivery.

Online Professional Development for Literacy Coordinators

Barb Pearce

Literacy coordinators across the province are responsible for all aspects of their community literacy programs, including the training of volunteer tutors. To help meet the training needs of literacy coordinators and volunteer tutors, NorQuest College is offering professional development online through WebCT. The goals of this initiative are to provide training in the area of learning disabilities and to make the training accessible to a predominantly rural audience.

The PD currently offered focuses on supporting adults with learning disabilities. It is estimated that a large number of adults with low literacy skills are also learning disabled. Teaching learners with learning disabilities requires specialized expertise and alternative approaches. Local programs need support to better meet the learning needs of these individuals.

The online resource is based on a two-day workshop that was videotaped in Edmonton. The workshop provided a framework for categorizing and identifying learning disabilities and effective teaching strategies and resources. The online resource is organized around these topics and includes video clips, PowerPoint presentations, handouts, and links to other online resources. Mentoring support is provided for workshop and online participants through a discussion board, e-mail, and the telephone.

This pilot project will run through the end of June 2005. For more information, contact Flo Brokop - flo.brokop@norquest.ca

Online with Adult Basic Education

Nick Williams

Northern Lakes College has launched a plucky initiative in providing access to online learning at the Adult Basic Education level. The pilot project in ABE is just one example of many program areas where online learning is expanding at the college. The idea was born when the new coordinator for ABE, Valerie Neaves, traveled extensively in our northern communities and consulted directly with ABE students to find out how we can serve them better. Two of the many messages the ABE students gave the college stood out: They wanted (1) access to synchronous online learning (just like the adult high school counterparts) and (2) more communication with ABE students in other communities.

The college first responded in the spring of 2004 by setting up a series of three lessons for selected learning centres on how to write a newsletter. Interaction was the key element in the lessons, as the students collaborated with one another to produce their newsletters. They were very proud of their finished work, which was widely circulated within the college.

In the fall of 2004, we set up a schedule of online sessions on a wide variety of topics, either core curriculum or enrichment, for delivery to all community learning centres. More than seventy students in three groups joined up to participate in nine weeks of online lessons, two 80-minute blocks a week. They received training and orientation in using Centra One. In the sessions they learned about many things including speaking skills, geography of Canada, interpreting news and current events, atoms and molecules, math skills, opportunities in outdoor education, the human body, Amnesty International, computers and outer space. The presenters were volunteers from within the college, both instructional and non-instructional staff. The students handed in mini-assignments for feedback from the presenters. As this was a pilot, marks received were for feedback only, and did not impact their progress reports.

We asked for feedback from students, learning facilitators and presenters. Students' responses showed a 64% approval and 16% disapproval (based on their answers to objective questions), while 20% were neutral or not sure. In written comments, many students said they liked interacting with other students, speaking out, hearing opinions and learning new things. Some students felt that the 80-minute sessions were too long, or that they didn't have enough time for their regular work, and others referred to the lack of interaction on the part of a couple of the presenters. Students have asked for more sessions on careers and job possibilities, and health. Based on this feedback, we have reduced the length of the sessions for the upcoming spring term, and cut them back to one a week, and we have re-doubled our efforts to ensure that all volunteer presenters are well-versed in the importance of interaction in classes. We are striving to accommodate the demand for the topics they are asking for.

Learning facilitators estimate that there are over 80 students ready to take part in the ABE sessions for the coming term. We are encouraging facilitators to use information about marked assignments and attendance in a component of the students' progress reports. We are excited about implementing changes to the ABE Enrichment sessions this term, and surveying the student once more to see how well we are meeting their needs. Fully online ABE courses in math and science will be phased in next year. We are confident that our initiatives in online learning for ABE students will help to reduce their feelings of being isolated, improve their computer skills more quickly, and expand their opportunities for learning.

If you have any thoughts about online learning for ABE students, we would love to hear from you. Please contact Valerie Neaves at valerie.neaves@northernlakescollege.ca or Nick Williams at nick.williams@northernlakescollege.ca

Faculty of Extension to host Teaching, Learning and Technology Conference

Ellen Whybrow

The Faculty of Extension will be hosting the McGraw-Hill Ryerson's Teaching, Learning and Technology Conference in Edmonton May 12th to 13th with the theme "Creating Learning Communities." This is a national event drawing experts and mentors with practical experience in innovative, reflective, and effective applications of teaching in the post-secondary classroom. Two keynote speakers will be addressing ways in which online networks are transforming the processes and practices of learning.

Dr. Derrick de Kerckhove, Director of the McLuhan Program in Culture and Technology will deliver a keynote address titled "Multiplying mind by mind: Teaching and learning in networks.

Dr. Etienne Wenger, a researcher and author who is best known for his work on "communities of practice," will be focusing on social learning systems as a means to fulfill human potential. His keynote is entitled "Learning in communities: a journey of the self."

For more details on the conference and other presentations, please visit our website at: www.extension.ualberta.ca/tlt2005

Learn, Teach, and Play with LearnAlberta.ca!

Kristy Payne

Alberta Education has developed a website, www.learnalberta.ca, that provides quality online resources to the Kindergarten to Grade 12 community in Alberta. Students, teachers, and parents can access a variety of multimedia resources that were developed in consultation with stakeholders and are based on Alberta Education curriculum guidelines. Safe, fun, and reliable, LearnAlberta.ca provides new ways to teach and learn.

New resources on LearnAlberta.ca

- Access to oomRoom.ca, a unique educational web site for the Kindergarten to Grade 12 Ukrainian language learning audience, is now available from LearnAlberta.ca. The web site was developed under the guidance of the Ukrainian Knowledge Internet Portal (UkiP) Consortium Association and provides on-line access to a range of Ukrainian language and heritage tools and activities for students, teachers, and parents.

- The National Geographic Science Centre on LearnAlberta.ca is complete! The NGS Centre offers resources licensed from The National Geographic Society including videos, teachers' guides, activity sheets, data pages, quizzes and transparencies correlated to sixteen natural science units from the Alberta program of studies:
  - o Needs of Animals & Plants (Grade 1)
  - o Small Crawling & Flying Animals (Grade 2)
  - o Animal Life Cycles (Grade 3)
  - o Seasonal Changes (Grade 1)
  - o Plant Growth and Changes (Grade 4)
  - o Weather Watch (Grade 5)
  - o Wetland Ecosystems (Grade 5)
  - o Trees and Forests (Grade 6)
  - o Planet Earth (Grade 7)
  - o Freshwater and Saltwater Systems (Grade 8)
  - o Biological Diversity (Grade 9)
  - o Interactions and Ecosystems (Grade 7)
  - o "Waste in Our World" (Grade 4)
  - o "Electricity/Magnetism" (Grade 5)
  - o "Sky Science" (Grade 6)
  - o "Cells and Systems" (Grade 8)

- The World Book Online has now been added to LearnAlberta.ca's Online Reference Centre.
  The World Book Online includes an encyclopedic database of more than 25,400 articles from the World Book Encyclopedia; 248,000 definitions of words from the World Book Dictionary; and a media database of 9,300 audios, 11,000 illustrations including 1,480 maps, 128 panoramic photographs, and 115 videos and animations.

- The Physics 20-30 resource on LearnAlberta.ca now includes digital video content. The Mechanical Universe and The Mechanical Universe ... and Beyond videos from Magic Lantern Communications, Ltd. have been correlated to various topics and integrated into the Physics 20-30 resource, which also offers more than 60 interactive applets and engaging tutorials.

- Eleven new discovery applets that address outcomes in Applied and Pure high school mathematics have been added to the LearnAlberta.ca web site. These applets provide an opportunity for students and teachers to manipulate parameters and easily visualize concepts being addressed. This resource has also adopted a new and improved user interface. In addition to grouping the applets according to strand and substrand, the new interface will now allow the user to select applets according to the course and grade they are relevant to: Pure Math or Applied Math at the 10, 20, or 30 level.

- New French resource on LearnAlberta.ca titled "Mes stratégies pour comprendre ma lecture". This multimedia resource, designed for Français 16-26-36 students as well as those registered in Français and French Language Arts Grades 6 to 12, provides the necessary strategies to help them successfully complete reading projects. Thirty learning objects support students in all phases of the activity: planning, reading and self-assessment. The "Guide d'accompagnement" is available as a PDF document.

- New Preview Zone launched on LearnAlberta.ca. This Zone offers authorized users access to learning resources that are currently under development:
  - o The newest Math 5 Live! lessons
  - o Science 9 e-Textbook: Space Exploration
  - o Science 9 e-Textbook: Electrical Principals and Technologies
  - o Math 3 Under the Sea
  - o Railways and Immigration (Grade 7 resource)

These resources will be available via the Preview Zone on a temporary basis during development and testing. New resources will be added as they come available. Go to the "What's New?" section or "Teachers" page on www.learnalberta.ca for a link to the Preview Zone. Your feedback on these resources is valued and encouraged.

Authorized users for LearnAlberta.ca are:

- Alberta students and their parents, and staff of all publicly-funded Kindergarten to Grade 12 programs in Alberta schools. Contact your classroom teacher, principal, or jurisdiction technology contact for your userID and password.
- Alberta students in Education programs in universities and colleges; students working in upgrading programs within the K-12 context at colleges; as well as faculty members, instructors, and library staff associated with these programs. Contact your program or department head for your userID and password.

The U of L Connects with National University of Ireland, Galway

Dave Hinger

The University of Lethbridge expanded it's reach once again on Wednesday, October 6, 2004 by successfully connecting to The National University of Ireland, Galway. The videoconference, part of a class on globalization instructed by professor and author Anthony J. Hall, lasted 2 hours and 40 minutes, and included very spirited conversation regarding international law. Using Alberta's Research Network (NETERA) to connect to international research networks, the videoconference connected at 2 MB/s for the duration of the videoconference.

The videoconference featured Michael Kearney and his colleage, Shaw'an Jabarin. Michael is a student completing his Ph.D thesis in international law at the Irish National University. Michael and Dr. Hall have a common interest in subjects pertaining to "the uses and abuses of law in the field of human rights and social justice." They are also both very active in devoting attention to the role of the mass media on the global stage. Shaw'an Jabrin is a human rights expert with the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organization al-Haq. He grew up on the West Bank, and spent years in an Israeli prison.

The conversation throughout the course of the evening was largely centred around the subject of international law, particularly the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the controversy surrounding the US role in Iraq. Michael & Shaw'an fielded many questions from students at the U of L regarding war propaganda and the United Nations Security Council. An especially lively debate developed over the nature of the 1967 war in Israel/Palestine.

Following the videoconference, Michael Kearney offered this: "We both enjoyed it and my eyes have been opened to the broad educational uses of the technology available. Shaw'an was telling me how they regularly use videoconferencing for meetings of NGO umbrella groups in the West Bank and Gaza." Referring to the diificulty that Palestinians have moving from place to place through Israeli check points, especially since the building of the new security wall, Michael added, "Though the NGO participants in Gaza and the West Bank may be geographically near, in fact they are probably in a logistical sense more distant than Galway and Alberta are."

The University of Lethbridge is delighted to add Ireland to it's growing list of videoconferncing partners, which include Australia, Sweden, the United Kingdom, among others. Dr. Hall, author of "The American Empire and the Fourth World", is a professor at the University of Lethbridge. His class, Globalization Since 1492, is a course that presents historical transformations over five centuries producing the current human condition. Dr. Hall's class provides many opportunities for the U of L widen its' list of accomplishments.

Calgary Two-Day ROI Competency Building Workshop

February 17 and 18, 2005

Come learn a simple, inexpensive and credible approach to measuring the return on investment of your learning, training and performance solutions.

This two-day workshop emphasizes the ROI Process developed by industry leader Jack Phillips. Participants experience application of the ROI Process Model. This includes developing application impact objectives, collecting various types of hard and soft data, isolating the effects of the program, converting data to monetary values, tabulating appropriate program costs, and calculating the ROI. Participants quickly see the advantage of the process as six types of data are collected and analyzed. This data represents both qualitative and quantitative data, developed from a variety of sources.

Workshop Agenda:

- Selecting appropriate data collection methods for impact studies
- Utilizing appropriate methods to isolate the effects of programs
- Utilizing appropriate methods to convert data to monetary values
- Identifying intagibles
- Calculating ROI
- Presenting results to senior management
- Developing and implementing an evaluation plan for a specific program in your organization
- Revising / updating internal policies on evaluation
- Improving the satisfaction of your stakeholders
- Implementation issues

Who Should Attend?

This workshop is for anyone in an organization who is reponsible for meauring the impact of learning and change interventions. The workshop focuses on the skills of research and measurement that are necessary to effectively conduct ROI studies.

- Training directors
- Management development specialists
- Evaluation managers and specialists
- Quality specialists
- Performance consultants
- HRD managers
- Performance measurement specialists
- Organizational development specialists
- Performance improvement specialists, course designers and facilitators

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A Special Thank You

ADETA is pleased to announce delivery of its monthly PD sessions via Elluminate Live! courtesy of NorQuest College.

ADETA would like to offer its sincere thanks to NorQuest College for its generosity.

Sidethought

Student Lost in Web Portal

Jon Baggaley

Distance educators are paying close attention to the recent loss of a student in a web portal. The 45-year old film student was, quite literally, lost, while logging in to the online 'Humphrey Bogart Portal'. He has become the latest casualty of the dangerous 'portal' craze that is sweeping online education.

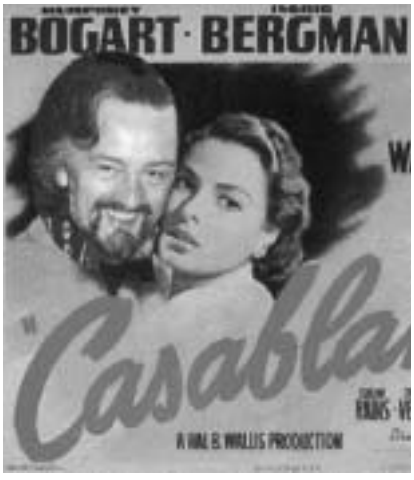
Athabasca University student Clem Dooley was last seen at his Edmonton home on 6 January 2004. When he failed to come out of his locked study four days later, his mother broke down the door and found him...gone. Clem's computer displayed the login page of the popular 'Bogart Portal'. Mysteriously, Clem's headshot had replaced Bogart's on the 1942 Casablanca movie poster (see photo inset). It appears that Clem had ignored the frequent warnings about the dangers of web portals, and had entered the Bogart portal while writing a film studies paper.

"Clem always was a Bogart fan," says his Athabasca tutor, Kris Waddell. "He seemed obsessed with Bogey's movies, and often talked about the Bogart tribute sites he had found on the web. When he discovered the Bogart Portal, he told his online classmates about it, and we all warned him to take care."

Movie critic Hailey Wimbush comments: "The movie industry has given many warnings about the dangers of portals. Films such as Somewhere in Time, Poltergeist, and most recently Being John Malkovich, all depict these dangers clearly. It is very important for web users to be careful not to click on login buttons on portal displays. This foolhardy practice places them at risk of being sucked down some kind of tunnel into another time or place."

Sadly, Clem Dooley failed to heed these warnings. Friends say that he insisted that 'portal' is simply a technical term for a web site that contains links to other sites, a search tool and so on, and which provides a useful first entry-point to the web for people with specific interests. He refused to grasp that this naïve theory could not possibly be true. Since most web sites now have all of these features anyway, the use of 'portal' as a term for 'web site' would be completely redundant.

So the distance education community mourns another member, who believed that important cyber-concepts such as 'portal' are simply empty jargon, and who was sucked through an online hole to become Humphrey Bogart. It clearly doesn't pay to sneer at the language of distance education, and those who belittle it do so at their peril. Future researchers will be able to tell us whether Clem Dooley is now to be seen in the lead roles in the old Bogart films. If so, we can take some comfort from the fact that Clem has become someone he idolized. Here's looking at you, Clem!



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