

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

**Innovations in Distance Learning
EDIT 611-201**

Instructor: Dr. Shahron Williams van Rooij
Class Date/Time/Location: Course meets online via Blackboard
08/31/2009 – 12/13/2009

Contact Information:

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TEXTS AND READINGS

Required:

The following texts have been selected to provide students with a solid foundation for evaluating and applying the e-learning technologies covered in this course.

1. Simonson, M., Smaldino, S., Albright, M., and Zvacek, S. (2008). *Teaching and learning at a Distance: Foundations of distance education*, 4th edition, New York: Pearson Education, Inc., ISBN-10: 0-13-513776-4. If you prefer the e-book version of this text, you may request it at:
<http://www.coursesmart.com/9780137131617?instructoruserid=1295381>
2. Palloff, R. and Pratt, K. (2005). *Collaborating online: Learning together in community*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, ISBN 0-7879-7614-8.

Recommended Readings:

The following texts offer real-world e-learning best practices and applications from academe, industry, and government and are good assets for the e-learning practitioner.

- Kidd, T. (Ed.). (2009). *Online education and adult learning: New frontiers for teaching practices*. Hershey: Information Science Reference, IGI Global, ISBN: 978-1-60566.
- Aldrich, C. (2005). *Learning by doing: A comprehensive guide to simulations, computer games, and pedagogy in e-learning and other educational experiences*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer.
- Clark, R. and Mayer, R. (2003). *e-Learning and the science of instruction*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Garrison, D.R. and Anderson, T. (2003). *E-learning in the 21st Century: A framework for research and practice*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Oosterhof, A., Conrad, R.M. and Ely, D.P. (2008). *Assessing learners online*. Saddle River: Pearson Education, Inc.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students will explore the latest innovations in e-learning technologies and environments as well as the theoretical issues central to e-learning. The course will cover online learning environments including, but not limited to, online learning communities, communication and sharing tools, content creation tools, and communities of practice. Hands-on activities with these technologies focus on planning, implementation, and evaluation. Students will research and present various emerging e-learning applications and how new approaches to learning can be integrated into today's K-12, postsecondary education, and training environments. Issues of target audience, design, and usability will also be addressed. Students will also work in teams to design and implement e-Learning modules using one or more of the tools explored during the course.

ENTRY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

The content of this course assumes a basic knowledge of the principles and best practices of Instructional Design. To be successful in this course, students should have either taken **EDIT 705** (Instructional Design) or have **work experience** that includes the basics of Instructional Design. Students should also possess basic computer skills (e.g., Internet search skills, MS Office).

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

This course will be delivered online using an **asynchronous** (not "real time") format via the Blackboard learning management system, with one synchronous ("real time") session via Adobe Connect at the end of the semester. The course will utilize a combination of readings, lectures, hands-on experiences, research activities, threaded discussions, and projects to help participants understand the strengths and limitations of current e-learning technologies, as well as the likely evolution of e-learning.

To participate in this course, students will need the following resources:

- Internet access with a standard browser(Mozilla Firefox or Internet Explorer)
- GMU e-mail account
- Blackboard access (go to <http://courses.gmu.edu> to review system requirements for running Blackboard from your home or workplace)

Students will be given authorization to access to the course by the instructor. To access the course, go to the Blackboard login page at <http://courses.gmu.edu>. Your GMU e-mail user name is also your Blackboard ID and your GMU e-mail password is also your Blackboard password. Once logged in, you will see a listing of all the courses for which you have registered. Select **EDIT 611-201**, read the *Welcome* page carefully and follow the instructions for starting the course.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- Differentiate among the terms e-learning, distance learning, distance education, distributed learning, blended/hybrid learning, and synchronous vs. asynchronous learning.
- Describe current leading edge programs in e-learning in K-12 settings, postsecondary education, corporate and government training environments.

- Discuss the ways in which teaching and learning across barriers of distance and time are similar to – and different from – face-to-face instruction.
- Demonstrate proficiency in using various commercial and open source interactive media (wikis, blogs, synchronous multi-user environments, groupware, and interactive presentation media), instructional delivery management systems and applications.
- Apply effective instructional design for various interactive media, instructional frameworks and applications.
- Experience how each medium for interacting across distance shapes the cognitive, affective and social dimensions of learning and indicate the range of individual responses to these media.
- Describe methods for evaluating the effectiveness of e-learning approaches.
- Discuss the various roles of the e-learning professional organizations and their respective audiences/memberships.
- Communicate how innovations such as Internet2 and mobile applications, as well as advances in multi-user virtual environments, computer-supported collaborative learning, and online communities are shaping the evolution of e-learning.
- Construct e-Learning modules
 - **Note:** Students who have already taken **EDIT 526** should make sure that the e-Learning modules comply with Section 508 accessibility requirements and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. Compliance is **optional** for all other students.

COURSE WEEK

Because online courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will “start” on **Monday, August 31**, which is the first day of fall session, and “finish” on **Sunday, December 13**, the last day of fall session.

WORKLOAD

Student success in this course is priority one. We have a great deal to cover in a relatively short period of time, so please keep on track. The scope and intensity of this course is such that playing “catch up” will prove to be extremely challenging. Expect to log in to this course **at least four times a week** to read announcements, participate in the discussions, and work on course materials. If there is anything you don’t understand, or if work or personal challenges threaten to derail your progress, please drop me a note as quickly as possible or call me, and we’ll talk.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

1. Technology Program and Profession Standards (ISTE NETS)

Within the Instructional Design and Development (ID&D) track, this course adheres to the following National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) established by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) under the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The complete list of NETS standards is available at http://cnets.iste.org/teachers/t_stands.html.

- Technology Operations and Concepts (IA & IB)

- Planning and Designing Learning Environments and Experiences (IIB & IIC)
- Teaching, Learning and the Curriculum (IIIC)
- Productivity and Professional Practice (VB, VC & VD)
- Social, Ethical, Legal and Human Issues (VIA & VID)

2. Curriculum and Candidate Competencies (AECT)

This course adheres to the standards for curriculum and candidate competency in the area of educational communications and instructional technologies (ECIT) of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT). The standards are intended to accompany NCATE's Standards, Procedures, and Policies for the Accreditation of Professional Education Units, and to address Standard 1 of the NCATE standards. The complete list of ECIT standards is available at

<http://www.ncate.org/public/programStandards.asp?ch=4#AECT>.

1. Design (1.1 – 1.4)
2. Development (2.3 & 2.4)
3. Utilization (3.1)
4. Evaluation (5.1)

3. Other Professional Standards and Guidelines

The ASTD Certification Institute has published standards that focus on evaluating the instructional design and usability factors of asynchronous Web-based and multimedia courseware for corporate and government training at

<http://www.astd.org/content/research/competency/competencyStudy.htm>.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

General Information

- All assignments are due by **11:59 PM EDT** of the date indicated in each week's assignments published in the **COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPICS** section of this Syllabus. Due dates are also posted on the **CALENDAR** section of the Blackboard course site.
- **Grades for assignments date-stamped in Blackboard after the due date will be reduced by 10% for each day that the assignment is late. No late submissions will be accepted after the course end-date.** Early submissions are always welcome!
- Please adhere to the assignment submission instructions listed in this Syllabus. **Only assignments submitted as indicated will be graded; incorrect submissions will result in a grade of zero for those assignments.**

Netiquette

Our goal is to be **collaborative**, not combative. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be easily misconstrued. I suggest that you always re-read your responses carefully before you post them to encourage others not to take them as personal attacks. **Be positive in your approach to others and diplomatic with your words.** I will do my best to do the same. Remember, you are not competing with each other for grades, but sharing information and learning from one another as well as from the instructor.

Assignments

There are **four (4)** assignments required for successful completion of this course.

1. e-Learning Technology Experience Series (20 Points)

The instructor will post a series of ten (10) questions relating to specific technologies and e-learning design issues to the Bb **DISCUSSION** board. Each student is expected to participate in the discussions in a meaningful way. All students are required to post **at least one (1) direct** response to each discussion question on the date indicated in our **Course Schedule/Calendar**. In addition, all students are required to post **at least one (1) comment** to a posting of any fellow course member. Comments to fellow course member responses may be uploaded at any time during the discussion week. Thus, for **each discussion question**, the **minimum** requirement for each student is one discussion question response **plus** one comment, for a minimum of **two postings in total per discussion question**.

Student comments should add significantly to the discussion by suggesting other solutions, pointing out problems, even totally disagreeing. Make sure that you substantiate your comments with **evidence** and, whenever possible, relate your work experiences to the topic under discussion. Comments will be evaluated based on the **quality** of those comments, whether the comments were **timely** and met the deadline indicated in our **Course Schedule/Calendar**, and the ability of student comments to **motivate** others in a collaborative effort. For more information on how discussion responses are evaluated, please consult the *e-Learning Technology Experience Series Grading Rubric* posted under the **Resources** link of the Bb **LEARNING MODULES** area.

2. Technology Deep-Dive (20 Points)

Each student will select **one (1)** technology (**with instructor approval**) in which he/she is particularly interested. Eligible technologies – along with examples of instructional events created with those technologies - include (but are **not limited** to):

- Wikis (Example: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki>)
- Blogs (Example: <http://clive-shepherd.blogspot.com/>)
- Multi-user virtual environments/MUVEs (Example: <http://secondlife.com/>)
- Instructional delivery systems (Example: <http://moodle.org/sites/>)
- Presentation and rapid e-learning media
(Example: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/~w3bio315/restricted/anim.htm>)

Using free trial versions, students will explore the tool and understand its capabilities to create relevant learning experiences. Each student will then prepare a **brief paper** (circa 2-3 pages, single spaced) describing and reflecting on his/her experience, along with a **PowerPoint presentation** (10 slides maximum) covering the highlights of the technology, with either Speaker's Notes or audio narration. **APA** format is preferred, but standard business formatting is also acceptable. Both the paper and the slide presentation are to be posted to the **ASSIGNMENT DROPBOX** in Bb on the date indicated in the **Course Schedule/Calendar**. **Note:** When uploading to the

ASSIGNMENT DROPBOX, make sure to attach **all** of your files before clicking SUBMIT.

For information on how your paper and presentation are evaluated, please consult the *Technology Deep-Dive Grading Rubric* posted under the **Resources** link of the Bb **LEARNING MODULES** area.

3. Create an e-Learning/Training Module Team Project (40 Points):

The class will be divided into teams of 3-4 people. If there are particular individuals with whom you would like to work, please send me a note via the Bb course **MAIL**. If you have no preferences, I will assign you to teams based on current/planned employment sectors.

- Each team must choose a **single** topic (with instructor approval). Samples of topics include (but are **not limited** to):

- Gender and e-learning
- Ethical issues in e-learning
- e-Learning and cultural issues
- Web accessibility issues
- e-Learning in the corporate environment
- e-learning and life-long learning
- Virtual reality simulations in e-learning
- e-Learning in the K-12 arena
- e-Learning in the higher education environment
- e-Learning in the government sector
- Copyright and intellectual property issues

- **Research and collect relevant literature and resources.** The resources collected by the team become the foundation for the team's choice of a specific design approach and the e-learning technology selected to implement the e-learning/training module.
- **Design and implement the e-learning/training module.** Your "live", working module – or a hyperlink to your module - must also be uploaded to the **ASSIGNMENT DROPBOX** on the Bb course web site on the date indicated in the **Course Schedule/Calendar**.
- **Examples** of e-learning/training modules created in **previous** EDIT611 classes are posted in the **LEARNING MODULE** section of the Blackboard course site. The *e-Learning/Training Module Grading Rubric* is also posted in the **LEARNING MODULES** section.

4. Module "Live" Presentation/Demonstration (20 Points)

Each team will be assigned a date/time during which an online presentation and demonstration of their "live", working e-learning/training module will take place via Adobe Connect, our synchronous conferencing software system. Each team should step the class through the goals/objectives and features/functions of their module, then open the floor for Q&A. Your presentation/demonstration may include PowerPoint slides, but slides are not required. Each presentation/demonstration,

including Q&A, should be **no longer than** 45 minutes. The *Module Presentation/Demonstration Grading Rubric* is posted in the **LEARNING MODULES** area of the Bb course site.

Total Possible Points for all Deliverables: 100

ASSESSMENT

General Information

The evaluation of student performance is related to the student's demonstration of the course outcomes. All work is evaluated on its relevance to the specific assignment, comprehensiveness of information presented, specificity of application, clarity of communication, and the analytical skills utilized. The grading rubrics for each of the course deliverables is posted to the **LEARNING MODULES** section on the Blackboard course site.

Team projects receive **two (2)** grades: One for the **project itself** based on the criteria set down in the grading rubrics and one for each team member's **individual** contribution to the project and the project process. **As such, scores for individual contributions may differ from the project grades.**

Grading scale

The grading scale used in this course is the official George Mason University scale. Decimal percentage values $\geq .5$ will be rounded up (e.g., 92.5% will be rounded up to 93%); decimal percentage values $<.5$ will be rounded down (e.g., 92.4% will be rounded down to 92%).

Letter Grade	Total Points Earned
A	93% - 100%
A-	90% - 92%
B+	88% - 89%
B	83% - 87%
B-	80% - 82%
C	70% - 79%
F	< 70%

Great care is given to evaluating student performance based on the requirements documented in the grading rubrics for each assignment. As such, grades are not negotiable. In the event that, following discussions with the instructor, a student feels that his/her grade is unfair, the grade may be appealed using the university's appeal process described at <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/index.html#Anchor56>.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

WEEK	TOPICS/ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS
Week 1 08/31-09/06	<p>TOPIC: COURSE KICK-OFF AND GETTING ACQUAINTED</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verify Blackboard access and troubleshoot any technical issues by clicking on the technical support e-mail link at http://courses.gmu.edu Read course <i>Welcome</i> page View <i>Introduction</i> video and explore Bb course site Review course Syllabus View previous EDIT 611 e-learning/training modules posted in the LEARNING MODULES area and start thinking about your project teams and project topics (see p. 6 of this Syllabus) Post your bio (photo optional) to the designated thread in the Bb DISCUSSION area and respond to the bios of your fellow course members Post any course questions to the designated thread in the Bb DISCUSSION area View the presentation <i>Online Learning, Lifelong Learning</i>, the link to which is under Presentations in the MEDIA LIBRARY area of Bb <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read for Week 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction, Chapters 1 & 2 in Simonson, Smaldino et al. Chapters 1 & 2 in Palloff & Pratt
SEPTEMBER 7 LABOR DAY HOLIDAY, NO CLASSES	
Week 2 09/08-09/13	<p>TOPIC: TEACHING/LEARNING AT A DISTANCE: PERSPECTIVES, DEFINITIONS</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments on Technology Experience #1 DQ responses throughout the week View the document <i>Tips for Successful Teams</i> posted in the Resources section of the LEARNING MODULES area <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to Technology Experience #1 DQ by 09/09 Send your team member preferences to instructor via Bb MAIL by 09/13 Read for Week 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapters 3 & 4 in Simonson, Smaldino et al.

WEEK	TOPICS/ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS
Week 3 09/14-09/20	<p>TOPIC: TECHNOLOGY TAXONOMIES: OVERVIEW</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments on Technology Experience #2 DQ responses throughout the week Finalize project topic with your team <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to Technology Experience #2 DQ by 09/16 Submit your team's topic for the e-Learning/Training Module project to instructor via Bb MAIL by 09/20 Read for Week 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part II, Chapters 5-7 in Simonson, Smaldino et al Chapters 3 & 4 in Palloff and Pratt
Week 4 09/21-09/27	<p>TOPIC: E-LEARNING TECHNOLOGY SELECTION BY DESIGN</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View the presentation <i>Technology Selection by Design</i>, the link to which is under Presentations in the MEDIA LIBRARY area of Bb Comments on Technology Experience #3 DQ responses throughout the week Begin using private Team discussion and Chat areas <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to Technology Experience #3 DQ by 09/23 Read for Week 5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part II, Chapters 8 & 9 in Simonson, Smaldino et al
Week 5 09/28-10/04	<p>TOPIC: CONTENT CREATION</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments on Technology Experience #4 DQ responses throughout the week Continue using private Team discussion and Chat areas <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to Technology Experience #4 DQ by 09/30 Read for Week 6: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part II, sections 6, 8 & 9 in Palloff and Pratt

WEEK	TOPICS/ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS
Week 6 10/05-10/11	<p>TOPIC: VIRTUAL TEAMS</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View the presentation <i>Online Conflict Management</i>, the link to which is under Presentations in the MEDIA LIBRARY area of Bb Comments on Technology Experience #5 DQ responses throughout the week Continue using private Team discussion and Chat areas <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to Technology Experience #5 DQ by 10/07 Read for Week 7: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 11 in Simonson, Smaldino et al
OCTOBER 12 COLUMBUS DAY HOLIDAY, NO CLASSES	
Week 7 10/13-10/18	<p>TOPIC: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the ECAR research article on <i>Intellectual Property Policies</i>, located under the PDF link in the Resources section of the LEARNING MODULES area Continue using private Team discussion and Chat areas <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit Technology Deep-Dive paper and slides (assignment #2, pp. 11-12 of this Syllabus) to the ASSIGNMENT DROPBOX by 10/15 Read for Week 8: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 12 in Simonson, Smaldino et al
Week 8 10/19-10/25	<p>TOPIC: E-LEARNING ADMINISTRATION</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments on Technology Experience #6 DQ responses throughout the week Continue using private Team discussion and Chat areas <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to Technology Experience #6 DQ by 10/21
Week 9 10/26-11/01	<p>TOPIC: TEAM PROJECT STATUS REPORTS</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments on Technology Experience #7 DQ responses throughout the week Continue using private Team discussion and Chat areas <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to Technology Experience #7 DQ by 10/28

WEEK	TOPICS/ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS
Week 10 11/02-11/08	<p>TOPIC: CONTENT PRESENTATION</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View the presentation <i>Mashingup Content</i>, the link to which is under Presentations in the MEDIA LIBRARY area of Bb Comments on Technology Experience #8 DQ responses throughout the week Begin using private Team discussion and Chat areas <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to Technology Experience #8 DQ by 11/04
Week 11 11/09-11/15	<p>TOPIC: CONTENT SHARING</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments on Technology Experience #9 DQ responses throughout the week Continue using private Team discussion and Chat areas <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to Technology Experience #9 DQ by 11/11
Week 12 11/16-11/22	<p>TOPIC: PERSONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the article on <i>Personal Learning Environments</i>, located under the PDF link in the Resources section of the LEARNING MODULES area Comments on Technology Experience #10 DQ responses throughout the week Post your availability for an Adobe Connect orientation to the <i>Connect Scheduling</i> thread under the Bb DISCUSSION area Continue using private Team discussion and Chat areas <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to Technology Experience #10 DQ by 11/18
NOVEMBER 23-29 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY, NO CLASSES	
Week 14 11/30-12/06	<p>TOPIC: TEAM PROJECT FINALIZATION</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select your team's date/time preferences for the e-Learning/Training Module project presentation (assignment #4) and post it to the designated thread in the Bb DISCUSSION area Finalize e-Learning/Training module (assignment #3) <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in Adobe Connect orientation (DATE/TIME TBD) Submit your e-Learning/Training Module (p. 6 of this Syllabus) to the ASSIGNMENT DROPBOX by 12/06

WEEK	TOPICS/ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS
Week 15 12/07-12/13	<p>TOPIC: COURSE WRAP-UP</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Online Course Evaluation Survey (Note: The Online Evaluation process ends on the last day of classes, before final grades are posted) • Post any final comments/thoughts to the designated thread in the Bb DISCUSSION area <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the “live” presentation/demonstration of your team’s e-Learning/Training Module (DATE/TIME TBD)

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS:

All students must abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

HONOR CODE

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University, have set for the following code of honor. Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting to cheat, plagiarizing, or stealing will be brought forth before a council of their peers. In the event that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly. For further information, please refer to the University Catalog or web site at www.gmu.edu.

This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the series, programs, or activities of all State and local Governments. Under ADA a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major

life activity such as: learning, working, walking, speaking, hearing, breathing, and/or taking care of oneself. If a student has a disability and needs course adaptations or accommodations because of that disability, it must be established with the faculty, in writing, at the beginning of the semester, so arrangements can be made. Please call the Disability Resource Center for required documentation (703-993-2474).