GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
Instructional Design & Development
EDIT772: Learning in Virtual Worlds (2 graduate credit hours)
Summer 2013
B Session (June 3 – July 22)

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name: Dr. Karen Cooper
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Virtual Office hours (in-world): Day or evenings by appointment via phone, email, or web.
Class times: Monday evenings, June 3-July 22, 2013 from 6:30-8:0pm.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Provides basic knowledge of available applications and platforms for creating contextually-based learning environments such as immersive virtual worlds, simulated worlds, alternate reality games, and massive multiplayer online role playing games for e-learning.

EXTENDED COURSE DESCRIPTION

Virtual Worlds feature autonomous, animated online communities in an experientially rich, immersive setting with benefits for education, training, and research as well as individual and social use. This course examines the terminology, skills, culture, and strategies that promote expertise and successful instruction in virtual worlds. Students use a hands-on approach to experience virtual world concepts and constructs, develop virtual world skills, explore virtual educational designs, investigate the risks and benefits of 3D immersive environments, and identify pedagogically grounded strategies for enhancing instructional value and effectiveness.

PREREQUISITES

This is a technology-rich course. Basic computer skills including downloading, installation and general use of software is necessary, along with the ability to configure and use speakers and a microphone.
A basic understanding of learning theory and instructional design is needed as this class focuses on '*Learning* in Virtual Worlds'. No computer programming or 3D building experience is necessary.
While no virtual world prior experience is needed, in order to successfully interact and participate in the class, please refer to and be prepared (!) in accordance with the

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS section below.

*** It is a fun class too(!) but it is important that you prepare prior to class. If a student is either not prepared or has technical difficulties, the class will be able to stop because of one student – this is not fair! If a student has difficult participating, they will lose participation credit for that class, and be required to follow-up with a classmate for material missed.*

COURSE MEETING DATES

(Monday) June 3, 2013 through (Monday) July 22, 2013
Each of the class sessions will be held in-world in the virtual world of Second Life from 6:30pm to 8:00pm. The instructor will be in-world beginning 6:00pm.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

The skills and competencies required to design and instruct in a virtual world will be acquired

through a blend of in-world discussions, online supplemental reading materials, and online and in-world investigation of videos, podcasts, journal articles, and virtual builds and establishments. There are eight required synchronous class meetings, as well as an expected two to four hours each week reading, investigating, and preparing for the next in-world class.

Class meetings are structured as follows:
The first part will be the virtual field trip. We will meet at a different location each week and begin by discussing aspects/designs/elements of the location.
The second part will be devoted to discussion on key topics, demonstrations, class exercises, and discussions.
The third part will be open discussion – this will be learner driven (!)
The final part of each class time will be wrap-up and assignments for the following week.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS
This is a technology-rich course. It is a fun class too(!) but it is important that you prepare prior to our first class. In order to successfully interact with media and participate in the synchronous portions of the course you will need access to the following:

1. Students shall be ready for the first class with speakers and microphone that have been tested. A headset with microphone is strongly preferred. Headsets can be purchased for about $20-30. If a headset is not an option, external or built-in speakers and microphone may work as a substitute.
2. Access to a broadband internet connection (DSL, Cable, T1, T3). Wired connection is strongly preferable over wireless connection.
3. A computer system that meets the recommended system requirements found here: http://secondlife.com/support/system-requirements/
   NOTE: NETBOOKS are usually inadequate to run the software we will be using. Check the system requirements and contact the instructor if you have questions.
4. The Second Life client application downloaded and installed*.
5. A Second Life avatar*. It is strongly recommended that a people avatar be selected (vs. an animal, robot or vehicle avatar). This helps to foster believability in an educational setting (we will be discussing further in class!).
6. Successful login to Second Life and completion of the Second Life Orientation (default location at initial login)*.

* Complete Getting-Started information is available at http://secondlife.com or https://join.secondlife.com/ Click the 'Join Now for Free' button.

Students with any questions or concerns should contact the professor prior to the first class. The first office hour will be held in-world prior to class on June 3, 2013 at 6:00pm, as an opportunity to students to receive additional help as well.

TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS
Kapp, Karl M., O'Driscoll, Tony (2010). *Learning in 3D,* San Francisco, CA: Wiley.
ISBN 978-0-470-50473-4
Second Life client (version 3.0 or later); Second Life avatar.

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS
You will learn to navigate, build, and evaluate virtual worlds and design to their practical, applied and instructional potential.

Your terminal objective is to demonstrate how and when to recommend a virtual world to any audience with qualified value relating to effectiveness, quality, cost, and performance.

LEARNER OUTCOMES / COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to enable students to:

1. Conceptualize, design, and instruct a virtual world educational course.
2. Develop virtual world skills in navigation, camera controls, inventory management, 3D object manipulation, content sharing and communication.
3. Evaluate a virtual world culture and the effect it has on education, research and social practices in a global environment.
4. Identify and critically evaluate the strategy and tactics needed to plan, conduct and leverage virtual education and training, collaboration, research, and virtual seminars.
5. Understand best practices for designing instruction in a virtual world.
6. Locate educational content, content experts and communities of practice in 3D virtual spaces.
7. Examine the human element within virtual worlds including the benefits and consequences of virtual identity, authentication, engagement, experience and perception, as well as social filters and barriers.
8. Identify and discuss the social, interpersonal, cultural, instructional, technical implications of virtual worlds.
9. Research the relevant literature in the field and investigate the current best practices as documented in the literature.

INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH

The course will emphasize a critical thinking approach to education. A critical thinking approach assumes that the student and not the instructor create knowledge. Students must actively question and reflect on the material, vice passively absorb it. Therefore, classes will use a discussion format with extensive student involvement.

The class activities will also engage the students to actively create new knowledge through direct experience. The student must think critically, not just memorize facts. Active participation and cooperation is expected during class time, with online discussions and in-world activities.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Professional Foundations

Apply current research and theory to the practice of instructional design.
Apply fundamental research skills to instructional design projects.

Planning and Analysis

Design a lesson plan or class.
Select and use a variety of techniques for determining instructional content.
Analyze the characteristics of existing and emerging technologies and their use in an instructional environment.

Design and Development

Select, modify, create a design and development model appropriate for a given project.
Develop instructional materials.
Evaluate and assess instruction and its impact.

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURES FOR STUDENTS

a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code].
b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html].
c. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their

George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.

d. The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See http://caps.gmu.edu/].
e. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See http://ods.gmu.edu/].
f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
g. The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/].
h. For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See http://gse.gmu.edu/]

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

On time attendance in class is mandatory as discussions, virtual field trips, and hands-on activities are important parts of the course.

Each student is expected to complete all readings and prior homework assignments, and participate in class discussions, as well as and contribute to asynchronous threaded discussions as assigned by the instructor.

Students who must miss a class are responsible for notifying the instructor (in advance) and for completing any assignments, readings, etc.

Students missing the due date for an assignment or exercise must make immediate arrangements with the instructor to fulfill that requirement before the next class.

The class schedule may change as the course progresses – this is a dynamic class with a learner-centric approach. Changes will be posted on the course Blackboard site under **Announcements.** The instructor will respond to student questions/requests within 48 hours.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Online discussions
2. In-world class discussions
3. Portfolio of weekly assignments
4. Final Project - Lesson Plan, Project Plan, or Story Board

1. Online discussions – posted on Blackboard. Constructive, insightful, thought-provoking and reflective contributions to the question(s) posted. Constructive, insightful, thought-provoking and reflective contributions to your classmates' posts.
2. In-world class discussions – dynamic, real-time discussion of topic and concepts. Constructive, insightful, thought-provoking and reflective contributions to the discussion.
3. Portfolio of weekly assignments – Throughout the course, students will develop an online, learning and growth portfolio. This portfolio will be on Blackboard in the Blog section, and should reflect an understanding of virtual worlds as an instructional media delivery platform option. The portfolio will consist of original work, references, papers, slurls, urls, lesson plan, videos, examples, ideas.
4. Final Project - final Presentation of Lesson Plan, Project Plan, or Story Board to the class on Instructional design idea using a virtual world. To include a critical analysis, explanation of why, and the affordances thereof.

CLASS SCHEDULE

This 2 graduate credit hour course is designed to be completed in eight weeks. Assignments are clustered in weekly modules. These topics may be subject to change(!)

MODULE 1: Navigation

June 3, 2013 6:30-8:00pm
Movement, Communication, Environment settings, Objects and Inventory
Virtual Field Trip, Stories, Examples, Discussion, Assignment

MODULE 2: VW Concepts and Constructs

June 10, 2013 6:30-8:00pm
Theory, Definition, Media Delivery Platform
Virtual Field Trip, Stories, Examples, Discussion, Assignment

MODULE 3: Building

June 17, 2013 6:30-8:00pm
Internal tools, external resources, Importing/Exporting, Web 2.0 Incorporating, Tools for Measuring, Effective Designing
Virtual Field Trip, Stories, Examples, Discussion, Assignment

MODULE 4: Capabilities and Affordabilities of the Virtual Space

June 24, 2013 6:30-8:00pm
Transcending time and space, filter of safety, distributed creation, crowd sourcing
Virtual Field Trip, Stories, Examples, Discussion, Assignment

MODULE 5: The Human Element

July 1, 2013 6:30-8:00pm
The people, the Learner, Identity, Presence, Co Presence, Temporary Suspension of Disbelief
Virtual Field Trip, Stories, Examples, Discussion, Assignment

MODULE 6: Best Practices in Instructional Design Best Practices

July 8, 2013 6:30-8:00pm
Empirical Research, Instructional Goals, Role Play, Fail Safe
Virtual Field Trip, Stories, Examples, Discussion, Assignment

MODULE 7: Other Virtual Worlds

July 15, 2013 6:30-8:00pm
Taxonomies, prominent options for education and instruction
Virtual Field Trip, Stories, Examples, Discussion, Assignment

MODULE 8: Presentations
July 22, 2013 6:30-8:00pm
Presentation of Final Project - Lesson Plan, Project Plan, or Story Board

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC
The **maximum** number of possible points for this class is **100.** The evaluation of your assignments and final project is based on the extent to which you used research, literature and relevant resources as the foundation for the design and implementation of the module. The criteria below apply to all assignments, each of the in-world class and online discussions (participation), and the final project (lesson plan and storyboard).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA
1. Online discussions = 20%
2. In-world class discussions = 20%
3. Portfolio (Class Blog) = 30%
4. Final Project (Lesson Plan, Storyboard, or Document) = 30%

GRADING SCALE
A = 94-100; Distinguished
A - = 90-93; Excellent
B+ = 86-89; Very Good
B = 83-85; Good
B- = 80-82; Satisfactory
C = 75-79; Minimally Satisfactory
F = 74 & below, Unsatisfactory at the Graduate Level

Distinguished
- Objectives/learning outcomes are clearly revealed; elected illustrations clearly demonstrate course goals, in 100% of learners' interactions.
- Exemplary use of visual and auditory stimuli and activities to create a sense of virtual community
- Exemplary use of a variety of tools and technologies
- Clearly communicated and well-reflected, informed assignments; content is logically and succinctly presented

Excellent
- Objectives/learning outcomes are clearly revealed; elected illustrations demonstrate course goals, in 90% of learners' interactions.
- Excellent use of visual and auditory stimuli and activities to create a sense of virtual community
- Excellent use of a variety of tools and technologies
- Clearly communicated and well-reflected, informed assignments; content is logically and succinctly presented

Very Good
- Objectives/learning outcomes are clearly revealed; elected illustrations demonstrate course goals, in 80% of learners' interactions.
- Substantial use of visual and auditory stimuli and activities to create a sense of virtual community
- Substantial use of a variety of tools and technologies
- Clearly communicated and well-reflected assignments; content is logically and succinctly presented

Good

- Objectives/learning outcomes are often revealed; elected illustrations demonstrate course goals, in 70% of learners' interactions.
- Appropriate use of visual and auditory stimuli and activities to create a sense of virtual community
- Appropriate use of a variety of tools and technologies
- Communicated and reflected assignments; content is generally logical and succinctly presented

Satisfactory

- Objectives/learning outcomes are somewhat revealed; elected illustrations demonstrate course goals, in more than half of learners' interactions.
- Adequate use of visual and auditory stimuli and activities to create a sense of virtual community
- Adequate use of a variety of tools and technologies
- Communicated assignments; content is somewhat logical and succinctly presented

Minimally Satisfactory

- Objectives/learning outcomes are barely revealed; elected illustrations demonstrate course goals, in only half of learners' interactions.
- Minimal use of visual and auditory stimuli and activities to create a sense of virtual community
- Minimal use of a variety of tools and technologies
- Completed Assignments; content is barely logical as presented

Unsatisfactory at the Graduate Level

- Objectives/learning outcomes are not clearly revealed
- Minimal/ no use of visual and auditory stimuli to create a sense of virtual community
- Poor/inappropriate use of tools and technologies
- Missing, incomplete, or unclear communication of assignments