Greetings from the Chair

Welcome to the Fall 2008 semester! This fall begins the 13th year for our distance program. Over that time we’ve had more than 700 students take one or more courses, 167 complete their Certificate in Instructional Technology, and 33 complete their Master’s Degree (we began the Master’s program in 2000). What started our in 1996 with a group of 20 students now reaches out to over 100 students every semester.

As our program has evolved, so have our course offerings. This fall is no exception. For our program “veterans,” we’re offering a solid “suite” of nine courses (see below). Of course, we’re also offering our two “prerequisite” classes—an overview of the field (EDTEC 540) and an orientation to web-based multimedia development (EDTEC 541).

It’s the diversity of course offerings that makes our program unique—in combination, of course, with the experience of our faculty and lecturers. What also strengthens the program is the diversity of our students. Each semester, Dr. Ritchie and I survey those enrolled in 540 and 541 – and what we find striking, time and time again, are the rich experiences all of you bring to the table. You represent nearly every sector in which performance technologists/consultants work—K-12, higher education, corporate, nonprofit, government, and military. You also work in an array of “settings” or industries (health care, retail, service sector, financial services); most interesting is how many of you are self-employed.

I’m thrilled that this semester, I’ll be working with some of you. I’ll be teaching ED 795A: Practicum, where students work...
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with community-based clients on design/development “issues” of mutual interest. I’ve taught field-based courses almost exclusively in my 12 years with SDSU/EDTEC, and what I most enjoy is their spontaneity. Though we do a fair amount of planning, these projects aren’t something that I, as a professor, have “contrived” … which means I can’t fully predict how they’ll unfold and what unexpected challenges we’ll face (or how we’ll resolve them). It’s certainly never boring!

Those of you who live in California know that the state faces tough economic times — and universities certainly aren’t exempt from the repercussions of a sour housing market, industry layoffs or cutbacks, etc. What complicates matters is that costs to run our programs (certificates and the master’s) continue to rise. Thus, after some deliberation we have opted to raise our fees this fall — the first increase we’ve instituted since 2001. Beginning immediately, our per course cost will be $900, up from $819. This is a modest increase in our view; we’re still charging far less than our competitors—-but the increase allows us to keep our teaching technologies current, cover faculty salaries associated with teaching and course development, showcase our program at conferences and other major events, and sponsor symposia to which distance students are invited (whether live or via archive).

We look forward to a fabulous semester, which formally “begins” on September 2—just after Labor Day. If you have any questions at all—whether about coursework, financial aid, registration, or some other issue—don’t hesitate to contact Dr. Richie or me.

Marcie Bober-Michel
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San Diego chapter of ASTD where I am currently the coordinator of the weekly Chapter Datebook (ezine) and will be a member of the Board of Directors starting next year.

Faculty focus: Jim Marshall
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In Spring, I’ll be teaching EDTEC 684 — Project Management for Educational Technology. Many of our students find themselves simultaneously designing instruction and managing the project. This course introduces basic project management concepts, tools and techniques. It provides the opportunity to conceptualize a project and author a comprehensive project plan. You work in project teams using case studies to complete the majority of the course assignments. We benefit from a handful of guest speakers that add diverse perspectives and relate their past project management experiences.

In the past, I’ve also taught EDTEC 540 and EDTEC 590 online.

Is there anything else you’d like to tell us about yourself?

Well, I love to travel and have been fortunate to visit Russia, Thailand and Cambodia in the past two years. I’m hoping to visit Africa in 2009.

It seems I’ve also become a dog lover over the past year, following the addition of a standard poodle to our family. It has been fascinating to apply training in the dog world. Through obedience classes and the principles of behaviorism working their magic, Wexler was top dog in his class and earned his Canine Good Citizen Certification. In September he’ll have a new sister, a Black Russian Terrier.

Fall is always an exciting time in university life. It’s a time of new beginnings and I look forward to meeting our new students and being a part of their initial EDTEC experience.

Previous newsletters available

Since 2003 we have been producing either two or three issues of EDTECConnect each year. Our endeavor with our distance newsletters actually goes back the year 2000, but it was more occasional during the first few years.

If you would like to see previous issues of our newsletters, which include focus articles on all of our faculty, in-depth articles on some of our master’s students, lists of alumni, and other interesting ideas, point your browsers to http://edtec.sdsu.edu/distance/newsletter.htm. There is always something good to discover.
Transitions

Although SDSU’s Educational Technology program has been in existence for over 40 years, it wasn’t until 1996 that we began to deliver our distance Certificate in Instructional Technology, and in 2000 that we were approved to deliver our distance Master’s degree in Educational Technology. In 2005 we had our first graduates of the distance master’s, and so far we have had 33 students graduated with the degree.

I recently emailed this select group asking what changes have happened to their lives since graduation. Five alumni from the 2006 and 2007 graduation classes responded, and their transitions are described below.

Lynn Cooke
Graduated: 2006
Current position: Instructional Technology Manager, Assumption College

I’ve seen a lot of changes in my life since graduation. I was married last October and gained an instant family, husband Charlie and two step children, Nicole (age 8) and Evan (age 12). In addition, we added a second dog to our clan, adopted from a rescue organization in Puerto Rico. As if the additions to the family weren’t enough, my husband and I purchased a new home in Oxford, MA on about 3 very rural acres and are in the process of finishing the basement.

In all this I haven’t changed jobs (small miracle) although the job is changing as we have a new director with plans to grow the instructional technology area of the department. This has meant more projects for me and a renewed enthusiasm for the job. In addition to managing the Blackboard system, I’m assisting faculty in implementing clicker technology into their classes, developing an evaluation process for our pilot programs, learning GIS technology, and managing a shift in support of our podcasting program, as well as consulting with faculty on technology use in their classes and instructional design issues.

Barbara (Delgadillo) Pugliese
Graduated: 2006
Current position: Instructional Designer

I work as an instructional designer for Apollo Group, Inc., in Phoenix, AZ. In my position I work on a large variety of projects designed for a number of different audiences. Most of my time is spent in the design phase of the ADDIE process as a consultant to the company and as a mentor to course developers.

Galadriel Chilton
Graduated: 2007
Current position: Electronic Resources Librarian

While I am still teaching and working in the library at the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse, my current delight is the study and practice of parenting as my husband and I had our first child, Cian, on May 14, 2008.

Matt McNerney
Graduated: 2007
Current Position: Project Manager, CourseWebs.com

My position has recently expanded from Training Analyst where I produced most of the online training materials (help, quick start guides, online tutorials) for our online learning system, to product development which involves working with programmers to add/improve/modify the functionality of our system. In a related role, I help/guide new clients as they develop and/or transfer learning materials to the online environment.

Marjorie Old
Graduated: 2007
Current position: Clinical Instructional Designer at ResMed in Poway, CA

Since graduating I have had more time to devote to other things that I enjoy: working in our yard; planting a vegetable garden, volunteering at the KPBS Reading Room (a service where we read the local newspaper over a closed radio station for the visually impaired), and being active in the
Faculty focus:
Jim Marshall

Jim, can you tell us a little about yourself?
I’ve been formally working in our field for 18 years, and in the education field for 22 years. I began my career in environmental education working for both SeaWorld of California and the Zoological Society of San Diego. I designed and taught classes about animals and conservation for pretty much everyone – from preschoolers through senior citizens. During that time, an EDTEC alumnus mentored me. She pushed me into San Diego State’s EDTEC Masters program and, to this day, I’m grateful for her not-so-gentle nudging. It has benefited my career and provided opportunities I would have never thought possible. I graduated with an EDTEC MA in 1992 and went on to earn a Doctor of Philosophy in 2000.

What did you do with your freshly-minted EDTEC Masters?
As I was finishing up my EDTEC MA, a friend in the program introduced me to his EDTEC 795A client – a Senior Instructional Designer at Andersen Consulting (now Accenture). She and I hit it off, and I ended up working for Andersen for two years. In 1994, a software startup called Lightspan was established. I was the 17th employee to be hired into a company that would grow to over 500 employees in five years. With over $30 million in venture capital, it remains the most heavily funded educational software start-up in history. With that financial support, we spent two years trying different technologies and instructional strategies, testing products with kids and working with animators in Hollywood to produce K-6 curriculum that would entertain and educate. I spent three years as an instructional designer and project manager, then became the Director of Research and Evaluation. It was a rare opportunity to both build the product, then research its effects in over 100 schools nationwide. Lightspan’s products won multiple awards, and our research was recognized nationally as rigorous evidence of the program’s results.

And more recently: What’s your life like today?
I’ve been a part-time faculty member at San Diego State since 1998, although I actually taught my first EDTEC course in 1995. I enjoy blending the theory and practice sides of our field and strive to bring my past and present experiences to the classroom. I also am involved in a number of consulting projects at any given time. Here’s two examples:

I recently built a training and performance support system for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to help broadcasters, libraries and museums in communities nationwide partner more frequently and more effectively. We created an online toolset, hosted a series of online seminars and produced two national television conferences hosted by Ray Suarez of NPR and The Newshour with Jim Lehrer.

I’m just starting a year-long evaluation for Elephant Odyssey, the San Diego Zoo’s new ~$45 million exhibit. We will be investigating what visitors learn as a result of this state-of-the-art animal habitat and interpretive experience.

What are the courses where distance students will find you?
This Fall, I’ll be teaching EDTEC 540 – Introduction to Educational Technology for the COMET (California K-12 educators) cohort. I’m looking forward to introducing the field of Educational Technology and making it practical in the K-12 setting. Judging by our program applications, we have some great new students joining this cohort and it will be a pleasure to assist them in building a foundation in the instructional design field.