

EDTECH 531 *Teaching and Learning in Virtual Worlds*

CONTACT INFORMATION

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MISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

The [Department of Educational Technology](#) supports the study and practice of facilitating and improving learning of a diverse population by creating, using, managing, and evaluating appropriate technological processes and resources. Believing technology is a tool that enhances and expands the educational environment, we promote the use of current and emergent technologies for teaching and learning in a dynamic global society. Educational technologists are leaders and innovators, serving in institutions of higher education, public or private school settings, federal, state or local educational agencies, community organizations, and the private sector.

COURSE DESCRIPTION & PREREQUISITES

This graduate level course explores the use of virtual worlds, primarily Second Life, for teaching and learning. Participants will identify and analyze the emerging research, as well as tools, pedagogy, SL teaching/learning environments, content resources, and various available assessments for virtual world teaching. This is a hands-on, project-based class where participants will have opportunities to design, facilitate, and evaluate instruction in Second Life. Course assignments are customized to participants' individual work contexts. Significant time must be spent in-world between class sessions to accomplish the assignments in this course. This is a highly engaging course where participants will interact with a variety of SL teachers, students, and researchers, attend virtual field trips, plan and conduct micro (15 minutes) teaching sessions, and work on individualized projects and research. This course includes asynchronous and synchronous components, including Moodle, and a weekly meeting on **Wednesdays, 3-5 PM PST/4-6 PM MT/11-1PM GMT** that occurs on EDTECH Island in Second Life, a virtual world. Second Life will form the basis for our virtual world class, and accounts are free to set up.

System requirements: <http://secondlife.com/corporate/sysreqs.php>

Prerequisite skills:

- * Use of camera controls
- * Ability to fly, walk, and teleport
- * Knowledge of communication tools (IM and chat, groups and group chat)
- * Basic building skills (create prims, add textures and content)
- * Basic inventory management (can find items, wear clothing, make a notecard)
- * It is recommended that participants have at least 15-20 hours of prior participation in Second Life before the course begins and completed an Orientation Course such as the [Virtual Ability](http://slurl.com/secondlife/virtual%20ability/168/98/22) <http://slurl.com/secondlife/virtual%20ability/168/98/22> .

COURSE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

AECT STANDARDS ADDRESSED [HTTP://BIT.LY/7YE9H2](http://bit.ly/7YE9H2)

- * Identify, analyze, and synthesize recent research in the use of virtual worlds for teaching and learning
- * Explore in-world and out-of-world technologies and tools to support virtual teaching subject area resources in SL
- * Understand pedagogical/andragogical techniques, and instructional models for virtual world teaching
- * Understand methods of assessment and data collection in virtual worlds
- * Design, implement, and evaluate virtual world instruction
- * Reflect on weekly readings and assignments through in-world synchronous meetings and out-world discussions
- * Contribute to the evolving social network of virtual world teachers.

COURSE READINGS AND RESOURCES

- * Global Kids Second Life Curriculum <http://issuu.com/holymeatballs/docs>
- * Robbins, S., and M. Bell, 2008. Second Life for Dummies Sarah Robbins and Mark Bell
- * Smith and Berge, 2009. Social Learning in Second Life http://jolt.merlot.org/vol5no2/berge_0609.pdf
- * Dawley, L., 2009. Social network knowledge construction: emerging virtual world pedagogy http://edtech.boisestate.edu/ldawley/SNKC_pdf.pdf
- * Journal of Virtual Worlds Research <http://jvwresearch.org/index.php?cms=default.0.0>
- * US Department of Education, 2009. Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies <http://bit.ly/5XlxaE>
- * The Gamer Disposition <http://bit.ly/7HYXTu>
- * Second Life Community Standards <http://secondlife.com/corporate/cs.php>

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

Grades will be based on total number of points earned on the following:

Weekly Class Activities, Assignments & Participation - Your online participation is critical to your own learning. Each week, you participate in weekly discussions, group work, activities, and/or mini-assignments. These activities are designed to enhance your understanding of the weekly topic. We're interested in the quality of your critical thinking, your reflections, your ability to find connections between materials, between theory and practice, your ability to contribute new understandings to the course, to assist your peers in their own learning and problem solving. If we feel you aren't reaching this standard, we will communicate with you. We will indicate minimum requirements. You are always welcome to add more.

Reflective Action – Reflection on learning is critical to developing long-term and deeply instilled learning. Reflective Action is a process for reflecting on learning, and considering and applying your learning to your own teaching context. You can make your weekly reflection in a blog using video, audio or text. It's your choice. You can keep them private, but you must share with the class. Post your links in the class Moodle discussion board.

Second Life Exhibit - Plan and create a Second Life Exhibit to discuss your initial micro teaching ideas or another topic or your choosing.

Micro Teaching Lesson Plan and Rubric - Develop a lesson plan and rubric for your micro teaching activity.

Micro Teaching - Teach, and evaluate a lesson in SL. These 15 minute micro teaching sessions will include a group teaching activity to specifically address needs developed in the curriculum negotiation process

during week one. Other topics can be chosen by arrangement. Specific criteria will be made available in class.

Building Activity – Plan and build a community project. This is a whole class activity designed to develop social networking and collaboration skills through an collaborative activity. Guidelines to be discussed in class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The course week runs from through Wednesday through Tuesday, with in-world class meetings being held on **Wednesdays, 3-5 PM PST/4-6 PM MT/11-1PM GMT**. Assignments are due on Tuesdays before class, weekly agendas will be available on Wednesday mornings. The syllabus and schedule is not set in stone and maybe adapted depending on the needs of the class and the availability of Guest Speakers.

TOPICS	DATE	OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES
Week 1 - Introductions and welcome	Jan 20	How is social presence useful for virtual world teaching?	Curriculum negotiation Join EdTech Community
Week 2 Orientation	Jan 27	What skills do we need to orientate our learners in virtual worlds?	
Week 3 Adventure Learning	Feb 3	How do we design virtual world treasure hunts or quests?	Role-play activity
Week 4 Role-play	Feb 10	How might role-play be useful for virtual educators?	Role-play activity
Week 5: Learning Spaces	Feb 17	How do different learning spaces influence our pedagogies?	
Week 6: Social Networks	Feb 24	How are Communities of Practice valuable for virtual world educators?	Choose groups and begin micro teaching projects
Week 7: Cultures of Virtual Worlds	Mar 3	How can culture enhance our virtual world learning design?	SL-exhibit
Week 8 Content Creation	Mar 10	Are there emerging pedagogies in virtual worlds?	Begin community building activity
Week 9: The Learners	Mar 17	In what ways might our learners influence how we teach in virtual worlds?	
Week 10: Comparing Virtual Worlds	Mar 24	Does each virtual world offer its own unique affordances?	
Week 11: Teaching tools and technology	Mar 31	What potential do tools and technologies offer for virtual world teaching?	

TOPICS	DATE	OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES
Week 12: Learning design in virtual worlds	Apr 7	How can we create immersive learner-centred designs in virtual worlds?	Complete community building activity
Week 13: Spring Break	Apr 14	No class	
Week 14: Assessment Tools and Techniques	Apr 21	How might we assess our learners in virtual worlds?	
Week 15: Group Micro teaching projects	Apr 28	Deliver group micro teaching projects	Peer feedback on teaching
Week 16: Group Micro teaching projects	May 5	Deliver group micro teaching projects	Peer feedback on teaching

GRADING SCALE: A = 900-1000 B = 800-899 C = 700-799 D = 600-699 F = 0-599

ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
12 Weekly Reflective Action Discussion Postings/responses (40 points per week)	480
Group Building Project	150
SL Exhibit Introducing Micro Teaching Project Or Other Topic	85
Micro Teaching Lesson (15 Minutes)	200
Microteaching Lesson Plan And Rubric	85
Total Points	1000

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All late assignments will not be accepted, save arrangements have made been prior to the due date or exceptional circumstances exist.

COURSE POLICIES

PROCEDURES

DISCLAIMER

Please note this important disclaimer: "Second Life" (with its abbreviation "SL") is a trademark of Linden Labs, which operates this virtual world. Second Life is a general-purpose environment: students entering this environment may encounter adult content, commercial solicitations, etc., which they may find annoying or offensive. Boise State assumes no liability for such experiences. Students and faculty will abide by Second Life Terms of Service. Linden Labs rates sims on content (PG/Mature/Adult). There is no reason that a visit to an Adult sim would be relevant to this class. No student will be required to visit a

Mature sim (PG alternatives will be available), though it should be noted that a Mature rating does not actually imply the presence of any potentially offensive content, and if there is any potential for offense in a sim of which the instructor is aware, students will be specifically advised.

Code of Conduct - all course participants must abide by the Boise State Codes of Conduct and Second Life Community Standards.

Communication Department policy - instructors will respond to emails and/or phone calls in a timely manner – usually within 24 hours (weekdays, but may be longer on a weekend or with advance notice to students).

Posting of Assignments – Department policy – major assignments will be posted at least one week in advance of the assignment due date.

Assignment Submissions - Feedback/grades – Department policy – Students must be informed of their progress toward the final course grade at regular intervals. Assignments will be reviewed and evaluated by the instructor within one week after the posted assignment due date.

Technical Difficulties – on occasion, you may experience problems with accessing Moodle or class files located within Moodle, with your Internet service, and/or other computer related problems. Do make the instructor aware if a technical problem prevents you from completing coursework.

- * BroncoMail - <http://helpdesk.boisestate.edu/email/broncomail/>
- * Moodle Assistance – <http://edtech.mrooms.org/>

Academic Honesty – all students are required to abide by Boise State University's Student Code of Conduct on academic dishonesty. Assignments completed must be your original work and cannot be used in other courses in the EdTech program.

Reasonable Accommodations - Any student who feels s/he may need accommodations based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. You will also need to contact the Disability Resource Center at 208-426-1583 located in the Administration Building, room 114 to meet with a specialist and coordinate reasonable accommodations for any documented disability.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION - THE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR

Boise State University strives to develop knowledgeable educators who integrate complex roles and dispositions in the service of diverse communities of learners. Believing that all children, adolescents, and adults can learn, educators dedicate themselves to supporting that learning. Using effective approaches that promote high levels of student achievement, educators create environments that prepare learners to be citizens who contribute to a complex world. Educators serve learners as reflective practitioners, scholars and artists, problem solvers, and partners.

AECT Standards - standards listed with assessments tied to standards. Check with the Adjunct Coordinator who will assist in aligning standards and assessments to course content.