

Editorial

Welcome to this second and final edition of e-JIST for 2006.

First and foremost I must again state my sincere apologies for the lengthy delay between the previous edition and this one. It seems so much is happening at USQ at the moment that e-JIST has had to take a 'back seat' while new changes are being implemented. I have decided that in the current organisational climate it will be best to drop back to one edition each year starting in 2007. The deadline for submissions will be July 31st, 2007 and the publishing date will be in November, 2007. Please note this information if you are intending to submit an article for consideration in the future.

This bumper edition contains a number of articles on a wide range of contemporary issues from contributors all over the world. As always, your feedback on any of the published works would be most appreciated.

The Full Papers section contains four interesting perspectives on learning environments. Chwen Jen Chen from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak discusses the relevance of spatial visualization abilities to virtual reality, while Heather Kanuka from Athabasca University in Canada discusses pedagogical content knowledge in the instructional design process. Her views on the importance of content knowledge may be at odds with many traditionalists but her arguments are well stated and deserve serious consideration. The second paper in this section is from Paula San Millan Maurino from Farmingdale State University in the United States. She examines threaded discussions in online environments primarily from the teaching perspective and her analysis of the research in this area thus far makes for engaging reading. The final paper in the full papers section is from Jan Elen at the University of Leuven, Belgium and Philip Louw at the University of the Free State, South Africa. This paper investigates the use of multiple instructional aids into learning materials and their impact on student learning of knowledge items.

The Current Practice section also provides some useful insights into what is happening at the teaching 'coalface'. Birgit Loch from the University of Southern Queensland and Diane Donovan from the University of Queensland, Australia look at the use of tablet technology in the teaching of undergraduate mathematics and the feedback from students over several consecutive semesters. Andrew Biro from Arcadia University in Nova Scotia Canada explains his recent use of election simulation software to create a successful experiential learning environment. Regular contributors Ann Shortridge, Toby De Loght and Benay Dara-Abrams explain their recently developed educational informatics project development guide prototype to assist staff to develop technology-based educational opportunities. All three contributions show the interest and preparedness of these current practitioners to improve the educational experience for their students.

The final contribution in the Commentary section comes from Carmen Latterell and Linda Deneen from the University of Minnesota in Duluth. Their paper on program evaluation methods to assist practitioners to embrace technology in their teaching is certainly a useful tool for others to know and reflect on in their own situations.

As always, submissions of new material to e-JIST are most welcome. You will find submission guidelines on this website. I am particularly interested in new developments involving the appropriate use of technologies in the creation of learning environments.

Until the next edition in late 2007, happy reading!

Alan
Executive
e-JIST
smith@usq.edu.au

Smith
Editor