

Multimedia to Enhance Learning

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Multimedia has become a huge force in North American education. It refers to the use of multiple strategies in the learning process. The most common strategy in university education is the lecture and when other strategies such as PowerPoint, video, DVDs are added, it becomes multimedia. The idea of multimedia is to address different types of learners' intelligences: bodily-kinesthetic, spatial-visual, musical, naturalistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. It is believed that using multimedia increases retention and can make learning more fun.

Many universities around the world have hybrid courses offered online and face to face. There is much debate about the effectiveness of face to face versus online, but educators agree that using both is more effective than using one method alone. As well, some faculty use games and have students create multimedia work for course assignments. There is much potential and use of multimedia in education, yet colleagues continue to use lectures with overhead slides throughout the academy. I am not sure if this is due to our own discomfort. This issue contains four examples of multimedia use. One article discusses using multimedia as a tool for player development; another article examines curriculum development and uses multimedia as a resource to deal with the complexities of curriculum reform. A third article uses art artifacts and conversation to provide a more enriching learning experience. A fourth article uses multimedia to teach statistics. One article is a reflection upon working with adult learners enrolled in an online learning course in Hong Kong and another draws on Daoist and Buddhist thought to understand the philosophy of learning and education that may be embedded in classroom learning. As well, there is an assessment and reflection by the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) Institute: Developing Scholars of Teaching and Learning, which has been providing mentoring and support for emerging scholars.

As technology increases, so will the opportunities and possibilities for integrating multimedia into education. One of the newest technologies that is used is Second Life, a virtual reality (<http://secondlife.com/whatis/?lang=en-US>). Internationally recognized and respected schools such as MIT and Notre Dame use Second Life for on-line collaboration. Users believe this method to be very cost-effective in terms of material and economic resources. It allows, for example, for you to practice your emergency response skills in virtual reality with a cardiac arrest. This is just one example of cost-effective multimedia tools that may become normalized in the near future.

Follow the link to Second Life and browse through this issue and dialogue. We would like to know how you interact with the published submissions. Feel free to send us your journal reflections and any ideas or insights that you may want to share about your work or the work of others.