

EDTEConnect

*Distance Newsletter of the SDSU
Department of Educational Technology*

Inside this issue:

Welcome to the Fall 2007 issue of the EDTEConnect distance newsletter. Inside you will find:

Betsy Bruce: Alumni Interview	3
New Graduates	3
Faculty Focus: Allison Rossett	4
Help Line	4
Need Advice?	4
News and Events	4

Calendar

Aug 9 – Registration begins for fall

Aug 27 – Fall term begins

Sept 3 – No classes: Labor Day

Sept 17 – Last day to register or drop fall classes

Nov 1 – Masters applications deadline for spring semester

Nov 12 – No classes: Veteran's Day

Nov 22-24 – No classes: Thanksgiving
Dec 8-15 – Final exam week

Jan 10 – Registration begins for spring term

Jan 22 – First day of spring semester

Volume 4, Issue 1

August 2007

Stay Up To Date with EDTEC: Announcing EDTEC News and Events

We've recently added a new section to our EDTEC web site: EDTEC News and Events. Designed to be a forum where faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends can keep up with what's happening in the Department as well as the broader EDTEC world, it features brief stories about department activities, new programs, honors and awards, and other news of interest. You'll find an events calendar, a news blog, an archive of newsletters, and more.

In addition to regular contributions from faculty and staff, we're also counting on you to tell us about what you're doing and learning so that we can all share the bigger picture of EDTEC beyond SDSU. We know that our alumni are involved in a wide range of fascinating activities, both professionally

See 'News and Events' Page 2

Handbook of Distance Education

Book review and comments: Farhad Saba, Ph.D.

Moore, M. G. (Ed.). (2007). *Handbook of distance education* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. ISBN 0-8058-5847-4. 690 pages.

The practice of distance education in the United States traces back to the late 1880s when print technology and the postal system became mature enough to make correspondence education a reality. However, theories of distance education were slower to emerge and were primarily developed in Europe, Canada, and Australia.

It was not until mid-1980s that Michael G. Moore established the *American Journal of Distance Education* (AJDE) to reflect the studies of American scholars in the field. He organized several symposia at Pennsylvania

See 'Handbook' Page 2

Fall 2007 distance courses announced

Registration for fall semester is now open. To sign up, please visit: <http://www.ces.sdsu.edu/edtec.html>. For course updates, visit <http://edtec.sdsu.edu/distance/update.htm>. To see the list of courses being offered in future semesters, please visit <http://edtec.sdsu.edu/distance/offering.htm>.

Certificate courses:

EDTEC 540—Educational Technology

EDTEC 541—Web-Based Multimedia

EDTEC 550—Distance Education

EDTEC 561—Advanced Web-Based Multimedia

Masters Degree;

In addition to the previous courses, the following courses are open to students earning the Masters degree:

EDTEC 670—Simulations and Games

EDTEC 684—Management of Educational Technology

EDTEC 685—Informational and Instructional Technology for Organizations

EDTEC 700—Seminar in Educational Technology

ED 795A—Seminar in Educational Technology

Handbook

Continued from Pg. 1

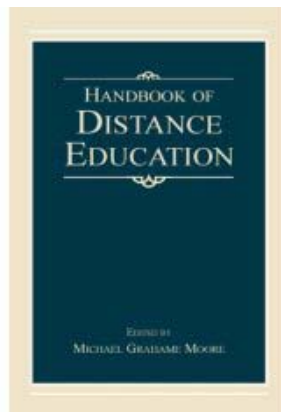
State University where he founded the *American Center for the Study of Distance Education*. He brought together American scholars interested in distance education to discuss and form research agendas to develop an American vision of distance education. In recent years, Dr. Moore, in addition to editing AJDE and other monographs and manuscripts, Dr. Moore has also published two editions of *Handbook of Distance Education*. The first volume was published in 2003 and the second in May 2007. These two publications include contributions of scholars in the U. S., Canada, Europe, and Australia in a coherent body of knowledge.

In Chapter 4, entitled *A Systems Approach to Theory Building*, I set forward a method that I developed while teaching at San Diego State University for capturing the many facets of the field into a systems model to offer a holistic view of the field. Further, I demonstrate how the decentralized approach to distance education in the U. S. has contributed to a conceptual confusion that is evident by terms such as e-Learning, online learning, distributed learning and blended learning. Although these terms are used in many publications, they are not based on empirical data or any grounding in theory. In the quest for pragmatic solutions in the U. S. these new terms and phrases were coined haphazardly to describe what newcomers to the field experienced for the first time. Unfortunately, no clear operational definitions came with the terms, so no one could test their validity and novelty.

The phenomenon of teaching and learning at a distance was formalized by scholars such as Moore and others in a theory-based and data-driven body of knowledge. As I discuss in my chapter, the American pragmatism that is partially responsible for the conceptual confusion can also be used as a solution. Pioneering pragmatists, such

as William James, thought that pragmatism was a “happy harmonizer.” Not being dogmatic, pragmatists do not hang on to meaningless terms, such as e-Learning, but offer a solid philosophical means to bring different ideas together and make a coherent whole out of them—a gestalt in which unclear terms, such as blended learning, are “harmonized” into operationally defined concepts that are researchable.

In one chapter, for example, Dr. Moore elaborates on the theory of transactional distance and demonstrates its robustness for explaining the



many relations between the instructor and learner, including the learner’s need to experience a “blend” of learning opportunities. In another chapter, Rick Shearer, an alumnus of SDSU’s Department of Educational Technology who is well versed in the theory of transactional distance and the use of systems dynamics, provides an overall view of how instructional design and technology can be used within the field of distance education.

Other American scholars, who have come to know one another through the symposia held by Dr. Moore at Penn State, are well represented within the book’s chapters. In reading the *Handbook of Distance Education* you will experience the emergence of a coherent and well-articulated field. The haphazard image of the field that

News and Events

Continued from Pg. 1

and academically and we want to hear about them. Both the *blog* and *calendar* pages feature a *submit* link, where you can forward stories or events of interest to our EDTEC community. Photos and small graphics are especially welcome.

We certainly hope to hear from you! To be sure to receive the latest news as soon as it’s posted, you can subscribe to both the blog and the calendar via RSS and your favorite news reader. To get to the new features, simply point your browser to <http://edtec.sdsu.edu/distance>, then click the News and Events link from the left menu.

Rossett, *Continued from Page 4*

What message do you have for our readers?

I just want to tell them that we enjoy them, that the faculty, and I think I can speak for all, really appreciate their excitement, diligence and smarts. It has been a privilege these past three decades—in fact, it still is.

(Editor’s note: Dr. Rossett will make several guests appearances this fall in EDTEC 685, Information and Instructional Technologies for Organizations).

jumps from one ill-articulated concept to another are absent here while the idea of “blending various approaches to teaching and learning” is dealt with under the robust umbrella of pragmatism and system theory. Although the book retails for \$196, it is well worth the cost for students who are seriously considering a career in distance education. *(Editor’s note: Dr. Saba will be teaching EDTEC 550, Distance Education, during the fall semester).*

The Master's Page

New Graduates 2006-07

Betsy Bruce Alumni interview

I recently communicated with 2005 graduate Betsy Bruce about her career.

ET: Who is it you work for, what is your title, and what is your normal work day like?

BB: I previously had a sole proprietorship but I started Performance Factor LLC about a year ago. I change my title depending on who I'm talking to! When I'm interacting with practitioners I usually call myself "lead consultant." When I'm talking with decisions makers I call myself "president." But like many small business owners I perform many different duties throughout the week including bookkeeping, taxes, salesperson, along with designing and developing training solutions.

ET: We've had some students who started at a distance and then moved to campus, but you did more than that. You started in Seattle, moved to campus, then completed the Masters back in Seattle. What was the impetus for the moves and how do you compare the distance to the campus program?

BB: I really liked both the campus and the distance program. It was great to go on campus where I became immersed in the program. I enjoyed the access to the campus resources and especially the faculty. The great thing about the distance program is that it fit in with my busy work life. I "attended" several classes in hotel rooms when traveling to conferences or client locations. I even attended one class sitting outside a closed Starbucks! This made it much easier for me to continue to work the way I work and also attend classes. I've lived in Seattle since 1987, and while I loved San Diego in many ways, I have so many personal and professional contacts here that it made sense to move back.

ET: You completed your Masters in

2006. Has the degree had any impact on your work life?

BB: Since receiving my degree I've felt confident to branch out into more instructional offerings. Before starting the program I mainly worked as a developer and trainer. Now I'm performing as a "one stop shop" for training, providing both design and development services for e-learning.



Alumni Betsy Bruce and Jim Staylor

ET: What are your career goals? What are you doing to help achieve them?

BB: I'd love to become better at running my business. Right now it's difficult to find a balance between not enough work and too much work. My goal is to have a stable set of other practitioners that I regularly work with. I think that these networks of small consultancies working together to bring in bigger projects is the wave of the future.

My career goal is to build my business and eventually have a couple of employees. I'd like to be able to consistently have the resources to work on slightly larger projects (\$100k+). I continue to network professionally because it seems to work best for me to work with people who are my friends. The SDSU program was great for networking and I've done projects, or talked about the potential of working together, with several of my SDSU classmates. I've also had great connections and professional events with

Our third set of EDTEC Masters students received their diplomas over the past 12 months. Congratulations go to:

- * Cathy Arreguin—Cameron Park, CA
- * Megan Beyer—Johnstown, PA
- * Gentiana (Pui) Cheung—Hong Kong
- * Jean Dugo—River Grove, IL
- * Marjorie Old—Vista, CA
- * Matt McNemey—Louisville, KY
- * Robert Smith—Hastings, NE
- * Matt Soria—San Diego, CA
- * Ruth Trimarco—Tampa FL

All courses completed towards our certificates can be used for our Masters degree. To see the requirements for application, please visit <http://edtec.sdsu.edu/distance/apply.htm>.

SDSU graduates; we have a bit of a secret society. Somebody needs to make up an SDSU EDTEC secret handshake!

ET: What advice would you give someone considering going into the masters program at SDSU?

BB: I think the program is excellent for establishing key contacts in the industry. SDSU has a prestigious faculty who attract many quality students. I would encourage any potential student to not only invest in the excellent educational experience but also invest in the personal relationships that will be beneficial later.

ET: Is there anything else you'd like to mention for our readers?

BB: The photo I've included is of me and Jim Staylor, who I met in classes at SDSU, on a video shoot at Target, one of my clients. Jim and I met in a project management class and plan to work on more projects in the future. We were shooting video for some online courseware that Target will be delivering to mechanics at their distribution centers throughout the U.S.

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATIONAL
TECHNOLOGY

SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY

North Education Room 280
College of Education
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-1182

Phone: (619)594-6718
Fax: (619)594-6376

Email:
dritchie@mail.sdsu.edu

Help Line

Toll free help line for
distance students is
1-866-316-8320.

Check [http://
edweb.sdsu.edu/iml/
student_help.php](http://edweb.sdsu.edu/iml/student_help.php) for

Need advise?

A new 'General Advising' link is posted from the distance website (5th link on the navigation bar). You can get there directly at [http://
edtec.sdsu.edu/
distance/advising.htm](http://edtec.sdsu.edu/distance/advising.htm)

News and Events

EDTEC Headline News and Views, a calendar of events, our Department blog, and current and past issues of the Distance Newsletter are all linked from the website at [http://
edtec.sdsu.edu/
distance](http://edtec.sdsu.edu/distance). It's the 10th link on the navigation bar.



Department of
Educational
Technology

Faculty focus: Allison Rossett

Allison Rossett is a Professor Emerita in our department, and has been working with us since 1977. I recently sat down with Allison and asked her a few questions.

Allison, what's this Professor Emerita thing?

I'm engaged in my so-called retirement. That means that I have formally retired from SDSU, but am now engaged in the Faculty Early Retirement program, aka FERP.

FERP allows me to spend one semester teaching for EDTEC and one semester on my own projects and engagements.

Why did you do this?

It was time for me to create time to do something different. I want to travel more. I want to hang out with my family more. And I want to find a hobby. You and my colleagues in the department have hobbies. But I don't. Not sure what it will be, but I'm hoping for something that is outside the world of workforce learning, educational technology, and so on and so forth. What do you think? I'm taking suggestions.

What have you done over the past years that please you and interest our readers.

Oh, there are many things I've done that make me feel good.

I think it starts with interactions with students over the years, many of whom are still in my life in surprising ways. My email is chock full of messages, with baby pictures and news of new jobs and questions about the field—most often from our alumni.

Next up, I think, is contributions to the field in the area of analysis. *Training Needs Assessment* and *First Things Fast* (www.jbp.com/rossett.html) remain influential in the field. I'm working on a revision to FTF now... well, soon... maybe next year.

I'm also proud of work done in the area of job aids and performance support. *The Handbook of Job Aids* still sells steadily. The new book, *Job Aids and Performance Support, Moving from Knowledge in the Classroom to Knowledge Everywhere*, [http://
www.colletandschafer.com/perfsupp/](http://www.colletandschafer.com/perfsupp/), has



gotten me engaged with on-demand learning and support, manifesting in blended systems. One other point of pride is that while I initially saw online learning as great for everybody else, but probably not for me because my classes are entirely too unique and special, I finally came around.

Once into it, I liked it. And I liked what I was learning about strategy. It gave me a chance to turn words into action, to try out theories about engagement online.

What have you been writing about, other than the books?

A few articles might interest our students and alumni. I'll pick a few that are available online, at no cost. The first is an article from T&D and a presentation about the subject from eLearning Guild. The second two were co-authored with our alumni.

Rossett, A. (February, 2007). Leveling the levels. *Training and Development*, 61(2), 48-53. Adobe asset on the topic: [https://
admin.adobe.com/
a62486834/
p18264048/](https://admin.adobe.com/a62486834/p18264048/)

Rossett, A., & McDonald, J. (Vol 11, 2006) Evaluating technology enhanced continuing medical education. *Medical Education Online*. [http://www.med-ed-online.org/pdf/
t0000074.pdf](http://www.med-ed-online.org/pdf/t0000074.pdf)

Rossett, A., & Marino, G. (November 2005). If coaching is good, then e-coaching is.... *Training and Development*. [http://
www.astd.org/NR/rdonlyres/73D0090C-
0FB4-4DBF-A4A5-
EA1C63583241/7922/76051146.pdf](http://www.astd.org/NR/rdonlyres/73D0090C-0FB4-4DBF-A4A5-EA1C63583241/7922/76051146.pdf)