EDITORIAL

This issue of DEOSNEWS comprises abstracts of articles from Volume 10 of AJDE. The Journal, a publication of the American Center for the Study of Distance Education at The Pennsylvania State University, has been published three times a year since 1987. Its purpose is to disseminate information and act as a forum for criticism and debate about the research and practice of distance education in the Americas. The focus is on the role of print, electronic, and telecommunications media and multimedia systems in the delivery of educational programs in universities and colleges, business and industry, the military, and in the public schools. Abstracts of the main articles from the three issues published in 1996 (10:1, 10:2, and 10:3) are presented here. Abstracts from previous publication years have appeared in earlier issues of DEOSNEWS (Volume 1 in DEOSNEWS 1:4; Volume 2 in 1:8; Volume 3 in 1:12; Volume 4 in 1:16; Volume 5 in 2:2; Volume 6 in 2:22; Volume 7 in 3:11; and Volume 8 in 4:12).

AJDE

VOLUME 10 NO. 1 - 1996

Author(s): Matthew R. Larson and Roger Bruning
Title: PARTICIPANT PERCEPTIONS OF A COLLABORATIVE SATELLITE-BASED MATHEMATICS COURSE
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 1
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 6-22

Abstract

Qualitative research methodology was used to explore the perceptions of students and classroom teachers participating in an interactive collaborative satellite-based mathematics course in twenty-one high schools. A pre- and post-test measure of college mathematics placement was used to compare students in the satellite-based course to those in a traditional pre calculus course. Results showed that a collaborative satellite distance learning format is effective for mathematics instruction when it provides classroom teachers with resources they would not typically have access to and when it is used with underachieving students. Results also indicated that the medium can be an effective way to implement nationally recommended curriculum and instruction standards in mathematics. Factors accounting for these results are discussed.

Author(s): Chere Campbell Gibson
Title: TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF ACADEMIC SELF-CONCEPT IN DISTANCE EDUCATION
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 1
Abstract

Academic self-concept has been demonstrated to influence student success in distance education. The purpose of this study was to examine the nature of academic self-concept in distance education and to determine its enhancers and detractors. It was determined that this construct is dynamic and multi-faceted: the process of both learning as an adult and learning at a distance, as well as the content studied, influences academic self-concept. Implications for both practice and further research are discussed.

Author(s): Gordon Burt
Title: QUALITY PROVISION FOR STUDENTS; THE IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL CHOICE THEORY
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 1
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 37-49

Abstract

Student feedback is often seen as an expression of the students' collective voice that can be used as the basis for decisions about course offerings. But what if student voices are not in harmony? Social choice theory alerts us to alternative rationales on which educational decision makers could base choices in situations where students disagree. Decision makers need to discuss which of these rationales to employ before designing feedback mechanisms. To illustrate these points, this paper focuses on the single dimension of student workload.

Author(s): Ricky Telg
Title: THE ROLES OF TELEVISION PRODUCTION SPECIALISTS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMMING
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 1
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 50-61

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the roles that television production specialists play in the development of live, interactive, video-based distance education programs. The sample for this study consisted of twelve full-time television production specialists who 1) were employed for at least one year at four-year universities across the United States to produce live, interactive, video-based educational programs, and 2) had no experience or educational background in the field of distance education prior to employment at their respective universities. Qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews, observation, and concept maps, were used to collect data. Findings show that television production specialists fill multiple roles, many of which go far beyond their television production training.

Author(s): Jose Manuel Alvarez Manilla
Title: EL PROGRAMA DE EDUCACION A DISTANCIA DE LA UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTONOMA DE MEXICO (UNAM)
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 1
Abstract (paper is in Spanish)

The organization of a distance education program at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), an institution more than four hundred years old, will help us to meet different needs: lifelong learning, higher education as a second chance, education for adults unable to attend regular courses to finish their studies, service to remote populations, and continuing education for faculty in the remote campuses. This program confronts barriers such as traditional structures, rapid technological change, and didactics in the use of media for instruction. Provision of education on a large scale depends on addressing issues dealing with research, infrastructure, development, training delivery procedures, and organizational changes. This paper describes some of the changes occurring at UNAM to develop distance education programs for lifelong learning.

Author(s): Rodolfo Herrero Ricano and Hector Barron Soto
Title: LA CALIDAD EN LA EDUCACION ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA EN MEXICO
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 1
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 68-71

Abstract (paper is in Spanish)

Since 1947, distance education in Mexico has had an important role for nonconventional populations. Considering that distance education is a heterogeneous and dynamic field, it is important to reflect on the need to improve quality as measured by our own standards. With that perspective in mind, a national meeting was organized to start a self-diagnosis in which quality and access were the main concerns. Five hundred and twenty specialists from fifty-one institutions participated in a national interactive synchronous meeting held in four regions. As a result of the meeting, thirty-five criteria and 230 parameters of quality were established. The main conclusion of the meeting refers to the need for the elaboration of our own indicators for open and distance education.

VOLUME 10 NO. 2 - 1996

Author(s): Chris Dede
Title: THE EVOLUTION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND DISTRIBUTED LEARNING
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 2
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 4-36

Abstract

This article speculates about how the development of high performance computing and communications may reshape both face-to-face and distance education. Its purpose is to delineate a three-part conceptual framework (knowledge webs, virtual communities, and shared synthetic environments) for understanding the new types of instructional messages that enable distributed learning. Citing
leading-edge scholarship to reinforce his claims, the author offers a position/discussion piece, not an inclusive review of distance education or educational technology research. The emphasis is on expanding the reader's conceptualization of distance education rather than on proving the validity of specific pedagogical practices.

Author(s): Philip C. Abrami and Eva Mary Bures
Title: COMPUTER-SUPPORTED COLLABORATIVE LEARNING
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 2
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 37-42

Abstract

In this response to Dede's discussion of the potential for computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) to facilitate learning at a distance, the authors address several questions: What are some concerns about current practices in distance education? What is known about the mechanisms and effectiveness of collaborative learning? and How do computer technology and small-group instruction interact? On this latter issue, they speculate about the ways computer technology may enable, disable, or become a transparent means of collaborative learning at a distance.

Author(s): Gary McI. Boyd
Title: EMERGENCE FOR WHOM? A COMMENTARY ON CHRIS DEDE'S "THE EVOLUTION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION"
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 2
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 42-47

Abstract

To Dede's three categories of new technologies Boyd suggests the addition of a fourth category: PALS, or Personal Assistant Linker and Shield systems. These symbiotic, artificially intelligent, personalized agent systems will filter, manage, and store knowledge in ways that reflect their owners' personal needs and aspirations. The author speculates that PALS will become essential for academics who need to cope with the floods of information that would otherwise inundate them. Boyd also suggests that Dede's article lacks consideration of the possibility that corporate interests and politicians may appropriate new educational technologies for "mis-educative" purposes.

Author(s): Chere Campbell Gibson
Title: TOWARD EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND DISTRIBUTED LEARNING: CHALLENGES AND CHANGE
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 2
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 47-49

Abstract

Gibson suggests that Dede's perspective reflects both "unlimited opportunity" and "unbridled optimism." While impressed with the numerous examples of multimedia and hypermedia, knowledge webs, computer-supported collaborative learning, virtual communities, and experiential simulation presented in the article, she questions the conclusion that the proliferation of these technologies
means that the opportunity to transform distance education into distributed learning is unlimited, particularly in the absence of discussion regarding the fundamental assumptions of teaching and learning.

**Author(s):** Peter Holt  
**Title:** A RESPONSE TO CHRIS DEDE  
**Publ:** The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 2  
**Publ. Year:** 1996  
**Pages:** 49-52

**Abstract**

In his response, Holt agrees with Dede's basic arguments, but cautions against what he views as Dede’s tendency to add unnecessarily to the jargon of the field. Additionally, Holt notes that much of what Dede discusses supports the concept of situated research practiced at Athabasca University and suggests that educational technology articles dealing with descriptions of new media should be offered in a multimedia format that demonstrates or provides links to the technologies under discussion.

**Author(s):** Roger Kaufman  
**Title:** SOME POSSIBLE REALITY THERAPY FOR WOULD-BE INNOVATORS: A RESPONSE TO CHRIS DEDE  
**Publ:** The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 2  
**Publ. Year:** 1996  
**Pages:** 52-55

**Abstract**

Although Kaufman believes that Dede has provided potentially useful guidance in the application of emerging technologies to distance learning/distributed learning, he identifies three weaknesses in Dede’s arguments: 1) ideological biases, 2) incomplete consideration of the context for determining learning opportunities, and 3) an incomplete research agenda that might restrict us to the processes for delivery and ignore consideration of the external payoffs for our learning investments. Kaufman expresses concern that these three weaknesses could result in inadequate consideration of Dede's otherwise important discussions.

**Author(s):** Greg Kearsley  
**Title:** EDUCATION AS USUAL: COMMENTS ON CHRIS DEDE'S ARTICLE  
**Publ:** The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 2  
**Publ. Year:** 1996  
**Pages:** 55-58

**Abstract**

Kearsley notes that Dede provides "a wonderful vision" of how distance education should change, but no hints about how to bring about such changes. He suggests that in order to implement any of these new distance education methods, it will be necessary to adopt a systems approach that addresses the changes needed to the infrastructure of schools and training: changes in the curriculum, management, staffing, and assessment of learning and teaching.
Author(s): Michael P. Lambert
Title: KEEPING FIXED ON THE OBJECTIVE: REFLECTIONS ON DISTANCE EDUCATION’S FUTURE
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 2
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 59-60

Abstract

Calling Dede's article "truly seminal," the author suggests that Dede deserves readers collective appreciation for drawing distance educators into an international dialogue on how we should invent our future. Noting that "tactical details of how, when, and who are left to the practitioners," Lambert suggests that those who are too fainthearted to join the upcoming technology battles might want to stay "in the rear with the gear."

Author(s): Farhad Saba
Title: DEDE'S DISTRIBUTED LEARNING; A SYSTEM PERSPECTIVE
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 2
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 60-64

Abstract

Saba suggests that although Dede's point of departure is contemporary educational technology, his primary focus is on the underlying models of learning. Saba bases his critique of Dede's article on the three themes of telecomputing, psychology, and sociology, and analyzes Dede's depiction of the future of distance education from these three perspectives.

Author(s): Erv Schieman and Tom Jones
Title: REVISITING THE MEDIUM/DESIGN DEBATE . . . AGAIN: A RESPONSE TO CHRIS DEDE
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 2
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 64-69

Abstract

The authors identify Dede's thesis in the following terms: New, high-performance computing and telecommunications capabilities will require that the learner of tomorrow be able to re-organize information from a myriad of disparate sources into a body of personalized, meaningful knowledge and to do so within a novel instructional paradigm, i.e., distributed learning. They then argue that this prediction and the subsequent call for a restructuring of distance instruction and learning are not new, as Dede implies. From this basis they address some of the assumptions that are inherent in Dede's article, present some "points to ponder," and offer some of their own perspectives on the development of the field.

Author(s): Thomas W. Smith
Title: A RESPONSE TO CHRIS DEDE
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 2
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 69-73
Abstract

Smith contends that Dede’s article contains both important concepts and serious misconceptions about the field of distance education. Noting Dede’s "useful intellectual service" in providing examples of knowledge webs, virtual communities, and shared synthetic environments, the author goes on to discuss his dissatisfaction with Dede’s failure to provide a philosophical context for the evolution of distance education through these new learning environments.

Author(s): Chris Dede
Title: CHRIS DEDE’S RESPONSE
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 2
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 74-75

Abstract

After thanking the reviewers and the guest editor, Dan Coldeway, for their time and effort in preparing responses to his article, Dede notes that the type of dialogue which characterizes this issue of The Journal is crucial in formulating new models for the changing field of distance education. He identifies four major concerns--design, control, implementation, and evaluation--expressed by those who reviewed his article and provides his own responses.

VOLUME 10 NO. 3 - 1996

Author(s): Whitney Rogers Bischoff, Sarah W. Bisconer, Barbara M. Kooker, and Lanell C. Woods
Title: TRANSACTIONAL DISTANCE AND INTERACTIVE TELEVISION IN THE DISTANCE EDUCATION OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 3
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 4-19

Abstract

Distance education, in which learners are remote from the primary educational institution and the teacher, is increasingly delivered via interactive television technology. Moore described transactional distance between students and faculty in distance education as characterized by dialogue and structure. He hypothesized that high structure and low dialogue yield "remote" transactional distance and low structure and high dialogue yield "close" transactional distance. The variables in the current study were operationally defined following Moore. Student volunteers in thirteen public health and nursing graduate courses at the University of Hawaii at Manoa responded to an investigator-developed questionnaire regarding elements of dialogue, structure, and transactional distance in their courses. Principal components and internal consistency reliability analyses verified the presence of three factors: structure, dialogue, and transactional distance. Dialogue was greater in the distance-format courses than in the traditional-format courses. Distance-format courses did not differ from traditional courses on amount of structure or transactional distance.

Author(s): Karen L. Murphy, Lauren Cifuentes, Ann D.
Yakimovicz, Rhoda Segur, Sue E. Mahoney, and Sailaja Kodali
Title: STUDENTS ASSUME THE MANTLE OF MODERATING COMPUTER CONFERENCES: A CASE STUDY
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 3
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 20-36

Abstract
The article presents an analysis of six semester-long computer conferences moderated by university students to discover how students perceived and used the conferences. The two purposes of the conferences were to provide a meaningful, authentic context for preservice teachers to learn about technology and collaborative learning and to provide an opportunity for graduate students to learn to moderate computer conferences in an authentic context. A qualitative analysis of the conference data yielded the following findings: 1) student moderator roles reflect the influence of both instruction and personal communication styles, and 2) participants adopted behaviors that fostered communication in a text-based environment and led to positive attitudes about computer conferencing. We conclude by identifying the critical tasks of moderators and participants in student-moderated computer conferences.

Author(s): J. D. Thomerson and Clifton L. Smith
Title: STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE AFFECTIVE EXPERIENCES ENCOUNTERED IN DISTANCE LEARNING COURSES
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 3
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 37-48

Abstract
The purpose of this study was to compare the affective perceptions of remote-site distance learning students, host-site distance learning students, and traditional classroom students toward the experiences they encounter while taking courses from the College of Education at Valdosta State University. The study used a survey instrument containing twenty-one Likert-scale statements grouped into four clusters (student-teacher interaction, overall course enjoyment/satisfaction, course structure, and the physical learning environment). The instrument was mailed to a sample of 495 students. Results of the study indicated no significant differences between the three groups in regard to student/teacher interaction or course structure. However, the remote- and host-site groups responded significantly less positively to questions dealing with the physical learning environment than did students in the traditional group, and the host-site group responded significantly less positively to questions dealing with overall course enjoyment/satisfaction than did students in the traditional group.

Author(s): Nancy F. Fjortoft
Title: PERSISTENCE IN A DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM; A CASE IN PHARMACEUTICAL EDUCATION
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 3
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 49-59
Abstract

A survey instrument was designed and administered to a population of currently enrolled and drop-out adult students in a post-baccalaureate doctor of pharmacy program taught at a distance. The data from the survey was used to test a predictive model developed to examine the parameters of adult student persistence in distance learning programs. The independent variables in the model were significant in predicting persistence and explained 23% of the variance in persistence. Intrinsic benefits, age, and level of student ease or comfort with individual learning were significant factors.

Author(s): Kyle Franks
Title: ATTITUDES OF ALASKAN DISTANCE EDUCATION STUDENTS TOWARD MEDIA AND INSTRUCTION
Publ: The American Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 No. 3
Publ. Year: 1996
Pages: 60-71

Abstract

This article reports the results of a study to assess the attitudes of distance higher education students in various units of the College of Rural Alaska, University of Alaska, Fairbanks. Emphasis was given to media preferences, the convenience of various media, and overall attitudes toward distance instruction. Results of a mail survey indicated acceptance of a wide variety of media as well as strong general support for distance instruction. Additionally, a large majority of respondents rated distance instruction as equal to or better than face-to-face instruction.