



IDeal: Design for Learning

Newsletter of the Instructional Design & Learning SIG

<http://www.stcsig.org/idl/newsletter>

SIG MANAGER'S THOUGHTS

by [Jane Smith](#), SIG Manager



Greetings SIG Members,

Every quarter when the time to write this letter rolls around, I wonder what I'll write/say. Sometimes it's been easy; I've been compelled to write something. Other times, it's a bit more of a stretch.

I'm writing this letter a little later than usual; it's January 1, 2007. Happy New Year! Perhaps on this day, I can bring up the question as to how we make decisions about our lives – big decisions and small decisions. When you have a problem in a project, how do you decide how to handle it? Do you take a piece of paper and draw a line down the center to do pluses and minuses on the solution? Do you gather trusted friends around, in a group or one-by-one, to gather opinions? Do you go about it logically? Or do you "go with your gut?" Probably each one of us has used each of these methods at various times.

As I get older, I find myself going for yet another method. I usually make my best decisions while driving or swimming. I find that letting go of a problem and letting it "perk on the back burner" often brings better, fresher results than ruminating over it for endless hours. Actually, I first realized I was doing this when I came up with solutions "by accident." The answer would magically appear while driving. Later, I've realized that I can consciously invoke this method by putting the question on the table, figuratively speaking, and allowing the answer to make itself known.

A variation on the question of solving problems is "how do you decide the direction you want your life to take when you find yourself at a crossroads?" Those decisions are bigger and tougher. Sometimes several drives and swims don't produce an answer. But tapping into my own enthusiasm and my body's reactions to thoughts and situations has proven extremely helpful to me. For example, I presented at the Region 5 Conference in Phoenix several years ago. I'd been away from teaching for a few years, and I thought I hadn't missed it too much. But after my presentation, I was on a high. In fact, I drove the two-hour drive home hardly noticing the towns I passed. A little scary, but my mind was totally on what else I could present in this field. When I paid attention to those feelings, it was clear that I needed to teach again.

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Then comes the next question: once you decide a direction, how do you make it happen? Or how does it happen? Or, can you make it happen? Someone asked me at this year's conference how to move from technical training into softer skills. Again, my method is two-fold, both left- and right-brained. If you've seen the movie, "The Secret," (www.theseecret.tv) you'll understand a little of how the right-brain approach works. I simply concentrate on what I want and keep the thoughts quite specific and clear, and eventually, I'm given an opportunity to move in the direction I want. Meanwhile, the left-brain is stirring the pot, networking, and going through some logical steps. In reality, regardless of what I do with my left-brain, often the opportunity comes of its own and always at the right time.

Sometimes it only takes a brief thought or comment, repeated or not, to make it happen. For example, for a while I would say in each of the e-Learning classes I taught that I thought I should get some experience with Authorware, just so I knew what I was talking about. It wasn't a huge desire, just a random thought about something that could gain me credibility. Lo and behold, a year or so later, I was given an opportunity to work on a project in which I

designed the course, mentored another designer, and programmed the course in Authorware.

To respond to the person who wanted to get out of technical training, I, too, found myself thinking that I could design training for software applications in my sleep and wanted to do something different. Since those thoughts and desires in early 2000, I have worked on projects for new hire orientation, hazardous materials, safety, internal and external theft, technical support, customer service, retail sales, public relations, and sales for financial advisor and banking personnel. I now find it slightly amusing that at a time when I am tiring of promoting myself, I'm designing several sales courses. Hm-m-m. Is there another message there somewhere?

So, as we embark on a new year, what decisions will you make for yourself in your career or personal lives and how will you ensure that you're able to realize your fondest dreams and desires? I wish you all the best. It's going to be a great year, full of opportunity. Go for it!

Best regards,

Jane Smith,
IDL SIG Manager



THE EDITOR'S WORD

by Robert Hershenow

Hello all,

For many of us, January brings the promise of new beginnings.

Whether we're considering a major life change or just tackling the mess on the desk, the new year seems to inspire confidence in and energy toward new things. The trick is in carrying that inspiration along into subsequent weeks and months. For me the secret lies in accomplishment – any progress along the way, even a small victory, stokes the fire and keeps the momentum going. Organizing the papers on my desk frees my mind for something a little bigger, like the quick documentation project I sketched out a few weeks ago and forgot about, and which just turned at the bottom of the pile!

This issue contains much inspirational material to get you going this season, beginning with Jane Smith's thoughts on how we process decisions. The feature article is by Joe Reynolds; it addresses context as an essential element of instructional design. Cynthia Hollingsworth looks at online facilitation, and Aparna Garg reports on STC India's recent conference. In our Thought-Leader Interview, Dr. Richard Mayer talks about his distinguished academic career.

As always you'll find a roundup of upcoming SIG and STC events, news, opportunities, and another impressive list of new members. Please join me in welcoming them to our group!

And please let us know how we're doing. We welcome your comments, questions, and suggestions, which you can e-mail to newsletter@stcidlsig.org.

Happy New Year!



IDeaL: Design for Learning

Newsletter of the Instructional Design & Learning SIG

Published quarterly in Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter.

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To help STC members identify and develop knowledge and practical skills for designing, developing, and implementing technical instruction in electronic and traditional classroom settings. The SIG strives to promote sound design practices, provide information, and educate about instructional theory and research.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

Contextual Immersion: An Essential Aspect of Instructional Design

by Joseph H. Reynolds, Ed.D.

While it might seem unusual to begin a discussion about instructional design with a war story, this anecdote is not only relevant, but credit is needed where credit is due. Officers attending the United States Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) in Montgomery, AL are educated in the nuances of conducting aerial warfare, and, as such, their education is essential to our nation's defense and survival. During the period 1995 to 2004 – and perhaps even now – the concepts taught included a simple precept: when preparing for war, planners must consider contextual elements. Be they political, economic, cultural, or even topographical, the multiplicity of contextual considerations fashions a unique battle space in every conflict. Although this concept is simple, implementation is enormously complex. Students at ACSC were taught that contextual elements were factors beyond the control of the commander, yet, through the practice of the *operational art*, commanders could negotiate and exploit contextual obstacles and opportunities (Reynolds, 2001 & 2002).

These ideas are similarly applicable in instructional design (ID). Every ID is influenced by context and therefore no two implementations are ever the same. This assertion is no revelation to seasoned educators; however, there are nuances of the ACSC model applicable to ID that are not so pedestrian. This paper offers some insights into context's influence by first reviewing notions found in recent literature, and demonstrating differences in the ways authors include context in ID. It then adapts ACSC's concepts toward a more pervasive view of context's role in instructional design.

NOTIONS ABOUT CONTEXT

It is useful to begin by examining other's notions about context. There has been adequate work in this regard, and such exploration provides a baseline for subsequent discussion. It should be noted, however, that there are variations in ideas and this is first evident through a simple attempt to define the term.

CONTEXT DEFINED

How authors define context in instructional design is influenced by their purpose and experiences in the field. Further, it is interesting to note the varying scale of prominence authors place on contextual considerations. Verduin (1980) emphasizes the political setting as a key consideration in curriculum building, and devotes a large portion of discussion to that end. Morrison et al. (2004) focus only briefly on the environment that affects both design and delivery, while identifying learner, physical, and knowledge transfer categories within that environment. Cafarella (2002) goes further, adding human and organizational elements in addition to environmental factors in her definition. Her chapter on discerning context includes discussion of these three factors. Dean (1994) also devotes a chapter to context, stating that "context is the surrounding social, political, economic, and other forces that impact the instructional design process and the teaching-learning transaction" (p. 55). Wilson (1995) recognizes that design is situational and admonishes instructional designers to manage the various parameters and constraints within which the process of creative design occurs. Johnson, Charner, and White (2003) note that

curriculum integration requires examination of contextual factors; specifically, those factors dealing with structure and operations of the instructional situation. Finally, Tessmer and Richey (1995), whose work in this area is most notable, define context as “a multilevel body of factors in which learning and performance are embedded” (p. 87). They go further to explain that these multiple levels have both spatial and temporal qualities within which a host of factors interplay.

Be it parameters, environment, politics, structure, or even a combination of elements, none of these explanations regarding context are incorrect; they’re simply forwarded to the extent necessary to advance each author’s purpose. Seels and Glasgow (1998) point out that various authors’ approaches to context are oriented to specific design situations like the workplace or public schools. Caffarella (2002) adds “the corporate sector, staff development in schools, or continuing education for the professions” to this list of situationally specific ID applications. In short, there is a context in which context is defined! Armed, therefore, with no single definition of context, while admitting that a definition of context depends on the context, it is similarly enlightening to explore what some highlight as context’s importance in ID.

CONTEXT: HOW IMPORTANT?

How crucial is an analysis of context towards successful instructional design? The answer seems intuitive: very crucial. Thus it is no surprise that author after author stresses the importance of implementing instructional design with a close and continuous eye on context. Wilson (1995) cautions “against simplistically ‘applying’ a model in a proceduralized or objectivist fashion” (p.652); instead, he states that designers must respect the situation’s details through a global contextual view. Merriam and

Brockett (1997) add that “planners must deal with the constraints of the institution or setting in which they work, with the resources available to them, and with the people—from supervisors to potential learners—who have a vested interest in the process and outcomes” (p. 121). Morrison (2004) echoes these assertions while Tessmer and Richey conclude that “we are condemned to context.... We can choose to ignore context, but are nonetheless influenced by it” (p. 88).

CONDUCTING CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

While it is thus recognized that context is a crucial consideration in instructional design, recommended techniques to conduct contextual analysis differ in both breadth and depth. Some authors consider contextual analysis as an element of a larger ID phase. Morrison et al. (2004) briefly discuss contextual analysis in their “Learner Characteristics” phase during which data collection techniques such as surveys, observations, and interviews are used to collect data about learners, environmental factors, and the learning transfer environment. In the same way, Seels and Glasgow (1998) embed contextual analysis within the larger phase of “Problem Analysis” in their ID conception. Here, activities include needs assessment and performance analysis as well as an analysis of the context “to describe factors related to the learner and environment that should be taken into account” (p. 195). Further, once an instructional designer determines what portions of the problem needs instructional solutions, the context is examined by gathering data to answer specific questions posed by a “Contextual Analysis Matrix,” writing context notes, and then adapting the notes to the actual design. Seels and Glasgow’s analysis matrix includes structural factors (the learner, institution, and organization) as well as temporal elements (preplanning, learning, and post-learning performance) to guide the analysis process.

<i>Environment for:</i>	<i>Learner Characteristics</i>	<i>Instructional Setting</i>	<i>Organizational Support</i>
Planning	What behaviors, prior knowledge, ability, and attitudes (e.g., towards content, delivery, and the organization) will the learner bring to the situation?	What constraints and resources will affect the selection and preparation of the social (e.g., instructors, dynamics) and physical setting for instruction?	What resources will be available for planning and development? What purpose will the instruction serve for the organization?
Learning	What are the characteristics of the group and how do they affect individual learners? Are individual learning preferences being met?	What characteristics of the social and physical setting affect learning? How credible is the instructor?	How will instruction be monitored? How will its relevance be established?
Performance	What support for transfer of training is needed? What other support is needed?	What social and physical constraints can hamper use of the new learning or skills? How can they be eliminated?	How will diffusion (adoption and maintenance) of the learning be encouraged (e.g., through rewards, norms)?

Fig. 1: Seels and Glasgow’s Analysis Matrix

Tessmer and Richey’s (1997) ideas also place contextual analysis into a larger ID scheme. Although they argue for “a new design phase we are calling contextual analysis” (p. 85), their influential work on context’s role includes a case overview that places contextual analysis squarely in the traditional needs assessment portion of the ADDIE analysis phase. To them, contextual analysis consists of three phases:

- strategy planning, where a plan is developed for subsequent analysis;
- data collection and analysis; and
- design and development.

This last phase seems to expand beyond the traditional analysis portion of ADDIE, thus hinting at an extended role for contextual analysis. Tessmer and Richey

include descriptions of analysis tools to include Pareto Analysis, survey, interviews, and observations to highlight temporal characteristics of the orienting (prelearning), instructional, and transfer (post learning) contexts. This is overlaid with analysis of the learner, the immediate environment, and the organization within each of those temporal elements. Tessmer and Richey’s work is perhaps the most mature and thorough available.

Other authors stipulate a separate contextual analysis phase. Dean’s (1994) fourth phase “Understanding the Learning Context,” is implemented by (a) determining involved entities, (b) scrutinizing these entities’ purposes, and (c) estimating the extent of influence each entity exerts. Once the most influential entities are determined, Dean recommends developing an

understanding of the decision makers within those entities and identifying cultural milieus. Finally, Dean forwards a series of questions used to assess both the immediate and extended context for both the proposed educational program and specific learning activities. Caffarella (2002) also includes a separate phase, "Discerning the Context," in her interactive program planning model. She recognizes five sources for obtaining contextual data: written documents, people, meetings or gatherings, germane associations, and technology sources. In analyzing those sources, Caffarella would have designers investigate three facets: the various people with a stake in the design, the organization itself, and the wider environment. Further, these facets are broken into subcategories. For example, when exploring the organization, designers should develop contextual appreciation for its structure, politics, and cultural factors.

Finally, there are authors whose concept of contextual analysis transcends the ID model itself. Here, contextual analysis is not a sub-element or a single phase; instead, it is a pervasive variable that influences the entire design process. Wilson (1995) emphasizes situated ID that "adapts itself to the constraints of particular situations.... [and] would be more sensitive to local conditions in prescribing both methods and outcomes for instructional design" (p. 649). He later offers numerous guidelines for situated ID. While too numerous to delineate here, the important point is that his guidelines recommend that the instructional designer analyze and acclimate to context in all aspects of ID; that is, from analysis to evaluation, all elements of ADDIE require contextual analysis and adaptation.

One might argue that Tessmer and Richey's (1997) analysis process described earlier actually falls within this category due to their recommendation that instructional design be viewed systemically, not systematically. They also recognize context's pervasive

nature and extend contextual analysis to various portions of ADDIE. And, while readers of their work could argue either case, what might be most important is that there exists such an argument. In short, it is not clear where their analysis process fits in ADDIE, and they make just that point:

We see contextual analysis as a missing emphasis within instructional design models, an approach worthy of its own step or stage. However, this does not mean that context-based design is fulfilled by the mere addition of contextual analysis. Other design activities should reflect a contextual perspective by (if they precede contextual analysis) providing contextual information or (if they succeed it) utilizing contextual analysis.... Contextual analysis is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for context-based, systemic instructional design (109).

Thus Tessmer and Richey agree with Wilson (1995) regarding context's pervasive nature. A simple contextual analysis step or phase does not suffice to insure a contextually relevant or situated design.

NEW NOTIONS ABOUT CONTEXT

These notions about context lead to some broad observations and provide the impetus for additional discussion. Having reviewed various definitions, one can surmise that *a definition of context will actually establish the context for subsequent discussion of context*. Also, context is clearly recognized as an important variable in instructional design, yet various authors recommend contextual analysis processes that differ in both breadth and depth. What seems to be lacking is universal recognition among instructional designers that context is *the* crucial variable guiding every nuance of design. Negotiating the impact of context is not an option, it's always done. Thus, instructional designers should overtly recognize this dictum, and train themselves toward constant contextual cognizance.

CONTEXT DEFINED

Previous work has amply described various contextual dynamics, yet, as noted, actual definitions promoted to some extent each author's purpose. Is it possible to discount personal predispositions and provide a consensus about context's meaning? Probably not, but it is worth a try: *context is foreseeable considerations that will impact instructional design yet are beyond the designer's control*. This is congruent with the earlier discussion about ACSC's ideas regarding campaign planning, yet more explanation is in order.

Context is *foreseeable* when designers employ rigorous analytical tools as described in the literature. Further there is also an element of experience in discerning contextual considerations; thus, veteran designers will better engage context's impact. However, forewarned is forearmed, so novice designers must make special efforts to embrace similar action. The wielding of such tools and planning savvy is akin to the military's operational art, which commanders hone through maturation and several years of professional military education.

Context is *considerations* since no other term captures both the practical yet conceptual nature of contextual cognizance. Lists are easy to produce, and lists of factors or elements will delineate items that could be considered. However, the important aspect of context is that whatever is considered must be central to the design under scrutiny – hence the conceptual nature of context.

Context is *beyond the designer's control*, yet because it is foreseeable, it can be accounted for in the design. Lack of control does not, however, dictate design futility. Recognizing that context has both constraining and fortuitous dimensions, designers must exploit context's fortuitous nature while dealing with constraints by employing the unofficial motto of several

military organizations: “adapt, improvise, and overcome!”

This definition lacks lists of elements, but includes sufficient detail to capture the complex nature of context. With it, designers can agree that context can be understood through careful analysis and, although not within the designer's control, must become an integral part of each instructional design.

CONTEXTUAL IMMERSION

Taking into account the work cited earlier, there is more than enough detail regarding the processes and factors involved in contextual analysis. What is lacking, or at least where there is confusion, is a definitive point in instructional design where contextual analysis occurs. As noted, some authors recommend contextual analysis within an established ADDIE phase, others advocate a separate step within instructional design, and some recommend continuous recognition of context's impact. This paper sides with the latter, that instructional design is immersed in context, and that designers should overtly recognize context's immersive quality. To further clarify, a useful metaphor to convey the pervasive nature of context is that of homebuilding.

Imagine you are an aspiring homeowner, dreaming of your custom built home to accommodate your family. Pristine in appearance, functional in every aspect, your dream home is the answer to your family's needs. At that point you take your ideas, which you might have sketched on a piece of store-bought graph paper, to an architect who transcribes your ideas onto a series of blueprints. However, in his design, he must adjust your dream home to pragmatic issues such as lumber sizes, affordability, and even roof slopes. Next you hire a builder who will actually construct the home. He too injects pragmatic modifications based on soil quality, topographic features, and current materials cost. Finally it is time

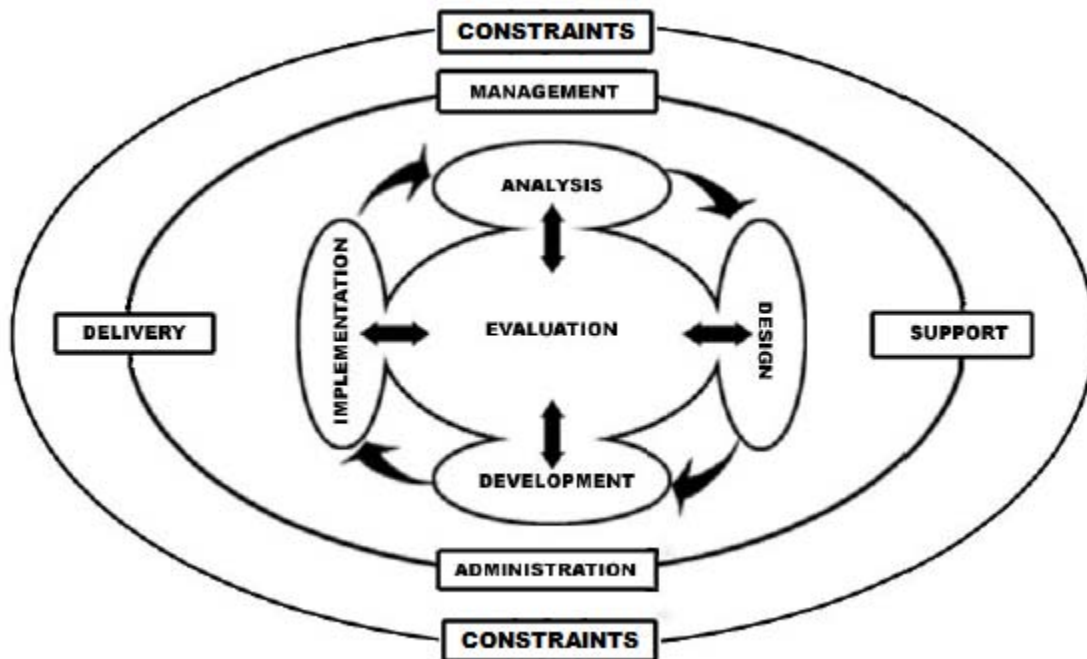


Figure 2. The Air Force ISD Model includes ADDIE as well as “Systems Functions” (Management, Support, Administration, and Delivery) and ever-present constraints.

¹Adapted from *Information for Designers of Instructional Systems Application to Education*, United States Air Force Handbook 36-2235, Volume 10, p, 11. 1 November 2002.

to move in, yet you discover that the foyer dimensions you wanted were a bit off in the actual construction and will not accommodate your huge \$12,000 mirror, or you find out that the blinds and curtains you wanted do not fit your custom living room window. Adjustments must be made based on these new considerations.

So too with instructional design: within each phase of ADDIE, the instructional designer must negotiate the opportunities and constraints that contextual immersion portends. The question now is, how should ADDIE embrace contextual immersion? Represented on Figure 2 is a rendition of the United States Air Force ISD model, one of many instructional design depictions found in the literature. While this model's recognition of the incidence of *constraints* is consistent with this paper's contention, it does not include contextual *opportunities*.

More important, however, is the model's center portion which is rather unique in ISD. Here, the Air Force recognizes evaluation as a process within each ADDIE phase; that is, *evaluation is pervasive*. And, it is here that the critical nature of context resides.

That is, within each phase of ADDIE, just as within each phase of home building, the designer must constantly make formative evaluation decisions to accommodate the real, pragmatic issues unique to that design. Hence the reason for the appeal of this model's center portion: it is simple to understand, but captures the complexities of ID with particular emphasis on evaluation's omnipresent nature. Revealed also is context's true nature: although contextual elements vary within each ADDIE phase, designers must render design judgments based on unique contextual considerations.

(continues)

WHAT'S NEEDED NOW

When studying World War I, ACSC students are taught Field Marshall Helmut Von Moltke's principle that "no battle plan survives first contact with the enemy" because the context will alter even the best laid plans. Instructional design is no different, and instructional designers would do well to adopt this famous saying. Designers must recognize context's influence and develop tools to negotiate its impact in every stage of instructional design. Further, designers must not tremble in fear of contextual immersion. Instead, the instructional designer must keep context at the forefront, taking advantage of opportunity and circumventing constraints.

While ADDIE is a simple acronym, texts discussing the implementation of instructional design are both voluminous and complex. This paper posits that the literature should include context as a part of evaluation in ADDIE and recognize evaluation's persistent nature. Thankfully, there is no need to add yet another ISD model to the dozens already developed. Yet, to embrace contextual immersion, literature could improve descriptions of the evaluation phase within ADDIE. Supplementing existing discussion with phase oriented milestones that prompt designers to analyze the context could create constant contextual cognizance, which is not only alliteration at its finest, but requisite towards elevating context toward a more prominent position in instructional design.



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Supporting Innovation

By Cynthia Hollingsworth, IDL SIG Member

In this article, I will discuss the role of the instructional designer in assisting face-to-face educators to become effective online facilitators. This involves identifying current classroom teaching strategies, transforming an instructor-led course into an online course, and mentoring the new online educator.

A logical question might be: why can't the faculty be the instructional designers? In short, they can. However, consider that faculty are subject matter experts (SMEs) in specific fields of expertise - such as nursing, industrial arts, literature, or botany - and were hired to teach that specialty knowledge to others. Instructional designers are SMEs in the science of learning theory. It makes sense then that allowing individuals to work within their areas of

strength, in partnership with one another, will result in a better experience for everyone.



To review, the cycle of instructional design comprises analysis, design,

implementation, and evaluation. Often though, the instructional designer does not enter a project at the analysis phase, and in fact may move among phases as a project is carried out. No matter which phase is being worked on, all the tasks must be accomplished to result in the most effective learning environment possible.

You might be thinking. "This is all well and good, but give it to me in practical terms: what do instructional designers DO?"

Recommend appropriate instructional design methodologies. For example, is the course self-paced or facilitator-led? Highly interactive? Discussion-rich?

Provide guidance regarding the best tools to facilitate learning in an online environment. For example, will the course use asynchronous discussion forums, or synchronous chats?

Assist with accessibility and copyright compliance and understanding. For example, is the course ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and/or Section 508 compliant? Have copyright and intellectual property factors been considered?

Instruct how to incorporate adult learning theories into online course design. For example, are alternative channels for accessing content provided? Does the content build on prior knowledge? Does the course provide time for reflection and incorporating new skills?

Recommend learning activities and assessment strategies. (I'll cover this topic in greater detail below)

- course outcomes
- assessment techniques

Instructional designers must understand how the course is currently structured, designed, and implemented before they can make valid judgments regarding what the online course should contain, how it should be structured, and how it should be implemented. During an initial meeting or series of meetings with the faculty, it is important for the designer to assess the following information:

- faculty expectations and goals for “going online”
- faculty learning needs
- development timeline
- learning activities

Understanding the course as it currently exists lets the designer make informed decisions in translating the course into an effective online learning experience.

During the planning meetings, the designer should take care to understand the variety of learning activities currently in use to achieve course outcomes. One apprehension of faculty new to online learning is how they will continue to engage the learners when they cannot see their body language or hear their voice inflections. The table below shows some examples of face-to-face strategies on the left and comparable online strategies on the right.

Face-to-face Strategies	Online Strategies
Lecture	Online lectures
Discussion	Discussion forums or chats
Homework	Webquests (e.g., “an inquiry-oriented activity in which most or all of the information used by learners is drawn from the Web” — see http://webquest.sdsu.edu/overview.htm for more information)
Projects	Guest experts, group projects, community-based projects
Face-to-face presentations	Online presentations
Library research	Online databases research
Writing	Writing

Online simulations, such as the drag and drop EKG sensor placement activity shown below, are great ways of engaging the learner, providing immediate feedback, and allowing necessary repetition until the learner masters a skill in a safe, non-threatening, and cost-effective environment.



You should note, of course, that the greater the activity's "coolness factor," the greater the amount of behind-the-scenes programming that is required. Just as can be said of large documentation projects, the simpler it looks to the customer, the more behind-the-scenes effort it took to get it there. However, just because an educator doesn't have the time, skills, or resources to create interactive activities doesn't mean that the online course can't take advantage of the numerous possibilities for active learning available free of charge on publicly accessible Web sites. The instructional designer can assist the educator in locating appropriate online activities. My Web site, Web by Design, provides a "starter" list of active learning sites at:

http://www.iupui.edu/~webtrain/active_learning.html.

Many more active learning sites are available – use your favorite search engine to find them!

Another task that frequently causes the educator moments of anxiousness with the online environment is how to evaluate learning. Many face-to-face educators evaluate by the scores received on multiple-choice and essay tests. Although the same type of evaluation can occur online, questions arise regarding cheating and how to prevent cases of "fraudulent identities." It is naïve to assume that cheating does not occur, yet it is inaccurate to assume that it happens more frequently in online learning environments than it does in face-to-face environments. Those who are prone to cheat will do so (or attempt to do so); the key for educators is in determining valid methods of evaluating learning while minimizing the opportunity for cheating.

Some possibilities for evaluation in the online environment include the following:

Open-ended tasks—In open-ended tasks the answers are not provided as they would be in a multiple-choice test. These tasks emphasize process and demonstrate that the learner understands not only facts and concepts, but can accurately apply them. These types of activities are particularly beneficial in evaluating graduate learners who should be moving into the synthesis and analysis of knowledge rather than the recitation of facts. Essay tests are one example of an open-ended evaluation

Collaboration—Online environments can be rich in collaboration and in-depth communication. The ability of learners to communicate reflectively, include additional sources of information and supporting documentation, and engage in critical analysis can result in more "rich" communication than often occurs in a face-to-face classroom where the discussion is spontaneous and not captured for later reflection. The online facilitator can analyze the communication and gauge advances in collaboration to evaluate the knowledge gains occurring in individuals and groups of learners.

Pre- and post-evaluative activities—

Instructional designers often create “pre and post” activities that may be used by the learners as a tool for self-evaluation. Including an activity for the learner to access prior to the “lecture content” allows the learner to determine areas where additional time should be spent in the content or to affirm baseline knowledge. Structuring a comparable activity at the conclusion of the content allows the learner to determine if the content has been mastered. Reviewing the results of the “post activity” allow the educator to evaluate the mastery of the learning.

Problem-based learning and case studies—

These learning “simulations” provide an opportunity to assess learning at multiple points. They can be used effectively at all levels of education, since they involve the learners in applications to resolve real-life problems. Working individually or in teams, learners apply facts, synthesize knowledge, seek out areas where additional information is needed, and determine resolutions to the situations. Online facilitators can guide the learners in critical thinking and evaluate how learning is occurring.

Portfolios— Portfolios are a way of gathering tangible evidence of learning, allowing the learner – as well as the educator – to see the growth that has occurred and to document experiences and activities. By carefully selecting evidence in the form of reflective statements, papers and articles written, projects completed, and other artifacts, the learner can build a visual archive of gains in learning.

Finally, let’s address the multiple-choice exam. Particularly at the undergraduate level, there exists ongoing value in multiple-choice, fact-based testing. Of course, educators must create sound testing instruments that are reliable, unbiased, and

proven, yet how can educators minimize the potential for cheating? Several techniques can be employed, depending on the testing application used. These include:

- creating a testing pool of question items from which a specified number of items can be delivered to the learner
- randomizing the order of questions delivered
- restricting access to the test to a small window of time
- restricting access by IP (Internet Protocol) address (the address of a specific computer or network of computers)
- delivering the test in a proctored setting (many schools and libraries may offer this option, or an educator or school may hire a proctor)

After the designer gathers all this information, educators are usually eager to learn about what they want to start with in the process: the design! Instructional designers can help the educator learn how to “chunk” the content, organize layout and flow, build in logical navigation channels, and create an effective design. Very often those new to design want lots of color and excitement with the result looking like “an explosion in a Crayola factory.” It’s up to the designer to help formulate a sound design plan. Remember, “just because you can, doesn’t mean you should.”

As shown with the two mock-ups on the following page, the tone of online courses can be established with design. The layout on the left shows a course that uses full color photographs, while the one on the right uses clip-art. Both use a simple design and lots of white space. The voice of the two courses is also different: one more formal and one more informal.

Supervising psychomotor skill acquisition

Most of the modules in the didactic course have one or more psychomotor skills that accompany the module. Precipitors have a key role in supervising psychomotor skill acquisition. Follow the links below to review the list of skills from each of the critical care courses:

- Adult Critical Care
- Neonatal Intensive Care
- Pediatric Intensive Care

Acquisition of psychomotor skill is a process involving demonstration, practice, and skill mastery. The typical steps for skill acquisition are as follows:

1. Demonstrate the steps of the skill from start to finish.
2. Demonstrate the skill again and, this time, discuss rationale for the steps and allow time for questions.
3. Encourage the student to slowly demonstrate the skill.
4. Encourage repeated practice of the skill.
5. Supervise the completion of the skill checklist to verify skill acquisition.
6. Notify the teacher/facilitator of the student's success.

Some of the beginning demonstrations of skills for the critical care course will occur online through various types of learning activities the student will complete. But, there is nothing like seeing a skill demonstrated on a real patient to increase retention of the steps of the skill. As an expert, you can role model the appropriate methods for a student. A demonstration link helps to make complex skills more...

al focus of the educational activity,


h importance: What is the best method for the given content? This second because the best method is not always appropriate for tical, affordable, or time-efficient.

riety of learning methods.

s to sit-and-take-notes.

lemer participation,

able references, and resources.



Mastery of course content can be enhanced with consistent navigation (the example here shows a “table of contents” on the left), providing multiple channels to course content, letting learners navigate as best suits their learning needs. Consistent, visible icons and color choices throughout the course also help to orient the learner to course content. This example demonstrates some of these features such as the use of a “logic map” image, which orients the learner to how this course “fits” in the series of four courses. The designer has used the same style of image to create visual indicators of required and optional learning activities, which are then used consistently throughout the course. The colors used for text, links, visited links, and headings are consistent throughout the course content, which act as a visual cues to the learner about the roles of various pieces of text.

Table of Contents

Course Information

- Schedule
- Grading rubrics
- Reading list
- Competencies

Norms and Netiquette

Module 1: Assessing Learners and Learner Support

- General info
- Learning activities
- Mini-lecture
- References and resources

Module 2: Teaching and Learning with Instructional Software

- General info
- Learning activities
- Mini-lecture
- References and resources

Module 3: Distance Education

T619 Computer Technologies for Nurse Educators
May 12—June 23, 2004

Welcome! We want to start off the course by:

- Providing you with information about the course
- Giving you an opportunity to meet each other (and us!)
- Providing you an opportunity to assess your learning needs in this course
- Establishing norms for participation
- Jump-starting our thinking about computer technologies for nurse educators

Required activities throughout the course are denoted with the image shown on the left. These activities provide you the opportunity to apply knowledge gained through the course content and interaction among course participants. We consider these activities to be essential to your success in this course.

Optional activities are denoted with the image shown in the left. These activities, while not essential to your mastery of the topic, will allow you to explore topics further.



lecture style where they impart knowledge to the “empty vessels” of learners. Both online and face-to-face classrooms result in better learning outcomes when learners are guided in knowledge building through the assistance of a facilitator.

The facilitator role is often foreign to educators, especially those who learned in a traditional learning environment. This is where the role of mentor becomes important to the new online instructor. Mentors:

- model
- monitor
- advise
- guide
- support
- praise

Ideally, anyone who teaches an online course should have first been a learner in an online course. This enables the

Finally, I want to address mentoring the new online educator. While this role does not necessarily have to belong to the instructional designer, quite often that individual is the one who assists the face-to-face educator in becoming an effective online educator. You may be familiar with the common phrase, “moving from ‘sage on the stage’ to ‘guide on the side’.” (Alison King; see <http://www.classroomtools.com/king.htm>) Classroom educators traditionally use a

individual to experience what it's like to be a participant in an online environment. If the individual is fortunate enough to take a course using the same online environment in which he/she will be facilitating, that's even more of a bonus!

After participating as a learner in an online environment, educators should then become a silent observer in an online classroom of an experienced, effective online educator, and then become the lead instructor in an online classroom where they can work on a regular basis with a mentor.

Mentors can help the new online educator in setting expectations including understanding and applying civility/netiquette, setting the tone (i.e., formality vs. informality), determining participation quality and quantity, understanding and dealing with technical abilities (of systems, learners, guests, the instructor), managing communications, and providing a support system. My rule of thumb: Know one! Be one!

In conclusion, I hope that I imparted the "value-add" that working in collaboration with an instructional designer can provide to an educator. In addition, I hope I have shown that challenges are manageable; rewards are great; and the work is fun!

Please feel free to contact me, if you want to ask any questions or offer any comments: cholling@iupui.edu.

Cynthia Hollingsworth is the Coordinator of Instructional Design for the [IU School of Nursing](#) located in Indianapolis, Indiana, on the campus of [Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis](#) where she assists faculty in the design and development Web-based courses. She also serves as a part-time lecturer with the School of Education and as an adjunct assistant professor in the School of Nursing's Department of Environments for Health. Her web site is <http://www.iupui.edu/~webtrain/>

STC India Conference *by Aparna Garg, COR India*

The STC India Annual Conference 2006 (held December 7th to 9th) was the biggest event ever in its nine year history, with about 600 attendees and many interesting guest speakers. I spent my time alternating between attending sessions and manning the STC booth as an IDL SIG representative.

In this article I would like to describe a few sessions that made an impression on me, and talk a little about the results of the survey we conducted and next steps for STC India.

Editing workshop, by Geoff Hart:

An excellent and very informative session about editing. In a short span of around 2 hours, we learned about the need for editing, the types of editing and differences between them, the process of editing, and

how to be a good editor by using tact and diplomacy. In fact the lessons on tact and diplomacy can also be used in the writer/reviewer context and in the writer/SME relationship.

The Business of Technical Communication, by John Rosberg:

A most interesting and thought-provoking session. The point was made that it's important to prove our value to our employer/client before asking for more money/resources, etc.

What made it even more interesting was the fact that using "low cost" as the only reason for off-shoring work to India would never work in the long run! As a line in the presentation said, "Whatever you can do, someone else can do cheaper!" So, we as

writers need to prove to our clients and employers that we don't simply bring a cost benefit; we must bring some other value to the table as well.

Leadership Development/Management Excellence, by Mahalingam, SVP, HR, Symphony Services:

An extremely engaging session consisting primarily of anecdotes and real-life scenarios that made some very interesting points about leadership and managers. When a session begins with a statement like "A mother finds it extremely tough to put a small kid to sleep, while I can put you professionals to sleep in a matter of minutes!" you know its going to be interesting and fun.

The session explained the difference between leaders and managers. It informed us that we don't need to be managers to be leaders. We can be leaders in everything that we do, even though we may just be an individual contributor! On the other hand, just because you are a manager does not mean that you are a leader... let alone a good one.

Ten Tips to Grow Your Writing Career: A Manager's Perspective, by Francisco Abedrabbo:

Francisco, from Oracle, started the session with a mock interview. He invited a member from the audience and asked him a few questions he probably asked each prospective candidate.

Five minutes into the interview he stopped the interview, and told everyone that he would not hire that person. He then explained what had gone wrong at the interview and proceeded to share tips to succeed in an interview.

He concluded the session with an amazing two-minute video about Oracle's writing team in India. As Oracle India is hiring, it was obviously an attempt at drawing talent, but it was fun to watch.

At the STC Booth, I tried my best to convey the value of STC and the IDL SIG. The brochures and SIG newsletter were very useful distribution items, which showed everyone that we were prepared and serious about promoting STC and our SIG! Anyone who stepped by the booth would get the brochure and a copy of the newsletter.

Our survey was only one of many; in fact there were so many surveys to fill out that most people were not filling out any! But I knew from past experience that we'd get more responses if people knew they would get an immediate reward. So, I had a stack of multi-colored business card holders on display. When people asked if they could have one, I would tell them that they needed to fill a small survey and return it to me! That did the trick.

There were several companies who were running competitions, small quizzes, or drawings in exchange for completed surveys. We had more takers because we had an assured gift.

I have not been able to fully analyze the survey – to which I received some 70 responses - but some results are:

- 90% of attendees were not STC members
- 90% of attendees were sponsored by their company
- 85% of attendees were from Bangalore, where the conference was held. - Many non-STC members asked how being an STC member would benefit them.
- Quite a few showed an interest in IDL.

As I often mention, the Technical Writing community in India is very young! IDL has been around for a while - but not many people know about it. Some don't understand IDL, some do ID, without realizing that it's ID!

(continues)

Many of those who know about ID don't know about the IDL SIG, or how they can benefit from membership. Common questions were:

- What is ID?
- Can you give a list of institutes who teach ID?
- What activities does the IDL SIG do?
- How can I benefit?
- Do we have regular meetings? How do we learn more about the SIG?
- Can we be a member of the SIG without being a member of STC?

At last count there were 141 members in the India Chapter of STC! But with 600 conference attendees, there is a large pool of people who are interested in IDL and who can join STC, if we can figure out how to reach them and convince them of the value in joining.

I have a post-conference list of action items. I plan to start a mailing list; I promised quite a few people that I would share interesting discussions from the SIG mailing list on a regular basis. I will also ensure that everyone gets a PDF of the SIG newsletter, and knows they can contribute to it!

Finally, organizing webinars and discussion calls for the group in India should be the next step – in line with the SIG Manager's goals for the SIG, and I will be working with SIG management on this.



THOUGHT LEADER Interview: Richard E. Mayer



Richard E. Mayer is Professor of Psychology at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) where he has served since 1975. He received a Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Michigan in 1973, and served as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology at Indiana University from 1973 to 1975. His research interests are in educational and cognitive psychology. His current research involves the intersection of cognition, instruction, and technology with a special focus on multimedia learning and problem solving. He is past-President of the Division of Educational Psychology of the American Psychological Association, former editor of the Educational Psychologist and former co-editor of Instructional Science, former Chair of the UCSB Department of Psychology, and the year 2000 recipient of the E. L. Thorndike Award for career achievement in educational psychology. He is on the editorial boards of 10 journals mainly in educational psychology. He is the author of 18 books and more than 250 articles and chapters, including Learning and Instruction (2003) and Multimedia Learning (2001).

Tell us briefly about your professional background. How did you get started in the instructional design profession?

I received a Ph.D. in experimental psychology from the University of Michigan in 1973, spent two years in the Department of Psychology at Indiana University from 1973 to 1975, and in 1975 I began my academic career in the Department of Psychology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where I have remained ever since. My research interests are in educational psychology and cognitive psychology with a focus on multimedia learning.

What keeps you excited today about continuing to work in this profession?

I enjoy conducting basic research on how to help people learn, including how to design instruction in computer-based learning environments. My focus is on understanding how instructional methods promote meaningful learning, particularly how to help people learn so they can transfer what they have learned to new situations.

Did you ever think you would become an expert in this professional field?

The question presumes I am an “expert in this professional field.” My goal is to contribute to the research literature on how to help people learn. My focus is on developing a theory of

learning and on developing research-based principles for instructional design.

What are the core principles of instructional design that are as important today as they were when you started? What core skills do you feel instructional designers should focus on today?

Instructional design should be grounded in an understanding how the human mind works (e.g., how people learn) and should be guided by research evidence rather than opinion and expert advice. The goal is to use instructional methods that promote cognitive processing that leads to learning.

What aspects of online learning will be most useful in the future? Why?

This question presumes that instructional media—that is, cutting edge technology—should be our focus. In the field of educational technology, our focus should be on the role of instructional methods rather than the role of instructional media. Learning is caused by instructional methods, not by instructional media.

What one nugget of advice would you offer today to someone who is thinking about entering the instructional design field?

My advice to someone thinking about entering the instructional design field is to make sure you

get a good grounding in the cognitive science of learning so that you are familiar with research and theory in how people learn. In addition, I recommend that you get a good exposure to the research evidence concerning instructional methods and that you become a knowledgeable consumer of instructional research.

Are degree or commercial certificate programs preferred? Do you have any recommendations for online programs versus traditional college programs? Do you view a certificate being better than a degree?

There are many routes to becoming an instructional designer. My preference is for a traditional college degree, however.

What reference materials or books would you recommend are important for instructional designers to have in their personal libraries?

I recommend: (1) Mayer, R. E. (Ed.). (2005). *The Cambridge handbook of multimedia learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

(2) Mayer, R. E. (2001). *Multimedia learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

(3) Clark, R. C., & Mayer, R. E. (2003). *E-learning and the science of instruction*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer/Jossey-Bass.

These books are examples of how to base instructional design decisions on empirical research, that is, on how to engage in evidence-based practice.

Please share with us your views on the future of instructional design.

In the future, we will gain a better understanding of how learning works and how to promote learning using instructional methods. We will be able to use technology to increase the efficiency of learning if we design instruction that is consistent with how people learn and with the research evidence.

[Link to Richard E. Mayer on the UCSB web site](#)

Calendar of SIG Events

January: SIG Scholarship announcement and applications out.

January 16: SIG Discussion calls on Best Practices in e-Learning.

March: Another discussion call, if the January call goes well. Topic TBD; stay tuned...

March: SIG elections and Member Survey

April 11, 2007: Webinar on "Increasing Interactivity in Webinars" by Thiagi (*aka* Sivasailam Thiagarajan, Ph. D.). Save the date- this promises to be a very valuable webinar!

May 13 – 16: International Conference in Minneapolis, MN. SIG Activities will include meeting and reception, luncheon, progression, and possibly other events to be planned.

Tips & Hints

Do you have a short tip or quick reference guide that you use when designing instruction or when teaching? Send your tips or hints to newsletter@stcidlsig.org.

MEMBER NEWS

By [Sylvia Miller](#), SIG Membership Manager

Hello and Happy New Year! It seems many of our members wrapped up 2006 with some praise-worthy activities. I'm sure their accomplishments will propel them into a year of additional achievements for 2007. Check out what some of your ID peers have been doing lately.

Phylise Banner from the Tech Valley Chapter (also with a membership in the Montreal chapter) has managed the Program committee for the Technical Communication Summit and put together an outstanding program for the 2007 conference in Minneapolis. Thanks for your efforts, Phylise. Everyone, start thinking now about how you can get there!

Jackie Damrau, STC Associate Fellow and Lone Star Community past president plus Co-Assistant Manager of the IDL SIG, was recently awarded the 2006 Binion Amerson Leadership Award (BALA). The Lone Star Community established the BALA last May to recognize members who have demonstrated outstanding leadership abilities during their service to the LSC. The award was named after Binion Amerson, STC Fellow and past Director-Sponsor of Region 5. Jackie has also successfully chaired the 2006 Region 5 conference, and is taking over as Managing Editor of the Lone Star newsletter. Jackie reminds me of the old saying, "Busy people get things done." Keep up the good work, Jackie!

Thomas Lunde of Motorola reports that the Chicago STC Byline, of which Tom is the editor, won an Excellence Award at the STC International conference in 2006. Congratulations, Tom!

Valerie J. Simons, a Member of Canada West Coast Chapter on location in Daejeon, South Korea, sought a black belt in Taekwondo and achieved it after 6 months of training in Korea. Cool! Congratulations, Valerie!

Lorraine Hughes, Catonsville, MD (Metro Baltimore chapter) has just completed a Masters program in ISD at the University of Maryland Baltimore County and received her M.A. in the graduation ceremonies. She retired in March, after 31 years with Northrop Grumman Corporation in Baltimore, so she says whatever she does with her degree will be in consulting on her own. Congratulation, Lorraine!

Sherry Michaels of Michaels & Associates recently released a major innovation in web site technology and content. This web site was a collaboration of a team composed of a media designer and project leader in Salida, Colorado, and a media designer in Phoenix, Arizona, as well as two instructional designers, a technical writer, and three programmers and the company owner in Phoenix. All worked from home offices, with no face-to-face meetings. The concept was to provide a realistic-seeming environment for prospective clients, current clients, and consultants for a virtual company. Innovations include the following:

- Dedicated area for consultants to enter project time and status. They also have a project forum area, and a resource area for job aids and template access.
- The company is advised of consultant availability through a dedicated calendar.
- Administrative personnel obtain payroll and invoicing reports from this area, and can search for consultants by skill for projects. The search process cuts the appropriate project match time by several minutes.
- Clients may access project hourly tracking and status reporting as well as a Forum of their own. They may view their projects in progress, and access all graphics and files related to their project from this site.
- There is a "free resource" area where web site users may download .PDF tips and techniques at no cost.

Sherry solicited feedback from the IDL SIG, and immediately incorporated much of it. Other changes are scheduled for the next release of the web site. The web site is located at www.docntrain.com. Thanks for sharing with us, Sherry!

Cara Coon, Assistant Vice President and Communications Director of Sterling Savings Bank in Spokane, Washington, recently won a battle she had fought for two years to report out from underneath the Compliance department. They were Technical Communication Services, and now they are the Communications department, with the added resource of the PR Administrator. Cara now reports to the Corporate Administrator, who is a Senior Vice President. Cara is from the Inland Northwest Chapter. Way to persist—and win—Cara!

Sheri Renner, Inland NW STC Chapter, Spokane, Washington, recently received a \$1,000 Mini Grant from the Spokane Community College Student Learning Outcomes Committee to embed student retention strategies, such as streaming video lectures using Tegrity software sessions, in the BlackBoard platform for her online Business Communications class. That's super, Sheri!

Jim Anastasiow, Past President of STC Southeastern Michigan, recently accepted a position as Business Analyst at Metavante, a Banking Services Provider in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Congratulations, Jim!

Sgt. Christopher Fryday, son of our member **Jacque L. Fryday**, recently returned from his 2nd year in Iraq and was just recently married. It was a Justice of the Peace wedding for now, but in July, they will have a big, formal, military wedding in church. The wedding is timed to coincide with Jacque's mother-in-law's 90th birthday and family reunion, so everyone can attend all three events on one trip. Thank you, Christopher, and congratulations Jacque on getting to meet a new daughter-in-law over the holidays!

Jennie (Achtemichuk) Douglas has expanded her consulting business so that she's now in Seattle US, and Cairns Australia, and she landed her first client Pernod Ricard Pacific through TACTICS Consulting in Sydney. Pernod Ricard is a leading wine and spirits company employing over 2,000 people and generating a turnover of approximately AUD \$1,2b, probably best known as makers of Jacob's Creek wines. Congratulations on your growing business, Jennie!

Don Benesh has become Manager of Technical Publications at ERG Transit Systems (USA), Inc. in Concord, CA. Don was instrumental in establishing this department. In particular, he takes personal pride in the fact that outside the office their company was once known as having a terrific product but poor documentation, but now their reputation is one of having "impressive documentation, better than your competitors." Hats off to you and your department, Don!

T. R. Girill has recently been published in the Dec. 2006 IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication. His article, "Building Science-Relevant Literacy with Technical Writing in High School," describes ongoing work to combine the cognitive apprenticeship approach with technical writing activities to help high school students improve their nonfiction communication skills. The project is jointly sponsored by the East Bay STC Chapter, which earned an STC Pacesetter Award for it in 2005, and T.R.'s employer, the Computation Directorate of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, CA. Email T.R. at trg@llnl.gov to receive a .pdf of the article. What a worthwhile project! Hats off to T.R. and the sponsors of the project!

Welcome to many new members who joined us over the past few months. The list of new members is provided elsewhere in this newsletter. We hope to be reading about you in this column very soon!

SIG NEWS

The Treasurer's Report shows our current balance is at \$8,152.28 as of December. The types of charges paid for by the SIG treasury include Webinar fees, STC Conference expenses, our scholarship membership mailings, and the cost of the monthly leadership conference calls. If you have questions, feel free to send an email to our treasurer at treasurer@stcidlsig.org.

There has been a lot of activity over the past quarter! You will soon be seeing a "makeover" on the IDL SIG Web site. There is a lot of great work going on focusing on content and usability. We'll be looking forward to getting your feedback in the first quarter of 2007.

A new brochure is now available in PDF format that provides a much needed "who we are" document for the IDL SIG. Watch your mailbox in the January/February timeframe for our annual membership mailing that will include a copy of the brochure.

The discussion list has provided valuable feedback regarding future Webinar topics and Discussion Call topics.

Discussion Calls will provide all members the option to participate in a discussion on a pre-selected topic. The dial-in conference format will allow members to participate in a call at noon in their own time zone and be an active participant in the dialogue. The first topic will be Best Practices for E-Learning Course Development. More details on registration will be provided in the Announcement List.

The next Webinar is scheduled for April 11, 2007, with the topic "Increasing Interactivity in Webinars" to be presented by Thiagi, (*aka* Sivasailam Thiagarajan, Ph. D.). Registration information will be available on the Web site and on the Announcement List as it becomes available.

Kudos to Jennie Douglas in Australia and Aparna Garg in India for their work in representing the IDL SIG! Both Jennie and Aparna are Community Outreach Representatives (CORs) in their areas.

A great deal of work has been done to create a database of Instructional Design programs.

This database will be added to our Web site, and will be used to reach out to the academic community to solicit applications for our annual Scholarship.

Conference planning is also underway. More news will be forthcoming as we receive additional information from the Society. Count on seeing IDL-related sessions!

We always welcome your ideas and your involvement. Feel free to contact Jane Smith at manager@stcidlsig.org or Jan Watrous-McCabe at secretary@stcidlsig.org.



IDL SIG Recognition Policy

The IDL SIG recognizes the contributions of the membership in those areas that support IDL SIG goals:

1. Build the instructional design skills of members at all experience levels, leveraging the knowledge of experienced members to deliver formal and informal guidance to the community of practice.
2. Provide a forum and mechanism for the free exchange of knowledge, ideas, and skills.

Committee chairs recommend members they feel have provided outstanding support of these goals in the following categories:

- Outstanding article for newsletter
- Quality and frequency of contributions to the discussion list
- Contributions to the web site, particularly the resource sections
- Speakers at IDL SIG events

The number of members recognized in each category is at the discretion of the committee chairs.

In addition to recognition of contributions that support SIG goals, individual members who have demonstrated outstanding foundational support of the SIG through their volunteerism will receive recognition. There are two categories of recognition available:

1. Society-sponsored Distinguished SIG Service Award (DSSA) recipients are selected by vote of the Leadership Council. Guidelines and application for the DSSA will follow existing Society procedures.
2. SIG Manager's Award recognizes the contribution of one outstanding member during the manager's term of office. The SIG Manager selects the award recipient.

The SIG Manager and DSSA awards are given annually at the STC conference. Other categories of recognition are awarded annually at the conference or by mail, at the discretion of the committee chair.

YOUR LETTERS

Were there articles that you found helpful? Is IDeAL: Design for Learning serving your needs? Is there an article or feature that you would like to see in the future?

Share your thoughts about the newsletter or give us your suggestions on how we can improve the newsletter by sending your letters to newsletter@stcidlsig.org.

SIG LEADERSHIP TEAM

The SIG's Leadership team members include:

SIG Manager: [Jane Smith](#)
 Asst. SIG Managers: [Karen Baranich](#), [Jackie Damrau](#)
 Communications: [Elizabeth Bailey](#)
 Community Outreach Representative Manager: [Aparna Garg](#)
 Conference Activities: [Karen Baranich](#)
 Membership: [Sylvia Miller](#)
 Newsletter: [Robert Hershenow](#)
 Nominations & Surveys: [Mark Hanigan](#)
 Programs: Jan Watrous-McCabe (temporary) Public Relations: [William Huscher](#)
 Scholarships: [Ginnifer Mastarone](#)
 Secretary: [Jan Watrous-McCabe](#)
 Treasurer: [Jeanette Thomas](#)
 Web Manager: [Nina Murdock](#)
 Website: [Chris Emanuelli](#)
 Member at Large: [Gene Holden](#)

SOCIETY NEWS



Intercom Online

The new Intercom Online is now available on the STC Web site at www.stc.org/intercom.

54th Annual Conference

Whether you're a novice or senior practitioner, manager or researcher, the Technical Communication Summit--STC's annual conference--caters to your need for education and professional growth.



[54th Annual STC Conference](#)

[What's New at the STC Conference](#)

 [free PDFdownload]

New components of this year's conference include certificate programs and Institutes (or conferences-within-the-conference). Click above for additional details, and be sure to register by February 28 to receive the Early Bird rate.

More STC News: <http://stcsig.org/idl/rss.php>

STC Mission

The mission of the Society for Technical Communications is to create and support a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communications

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

STC offers several opportunities to learn and improve your knowledge in technical communication and instructional design. Check out some of these opportunities to update your skill set, have fun, and increase your earning potential!

STC Telephone Seminars

A telephone seminar is much like a large conference call in which the speaker makes a presentation over the phone. As a participant, you simply dial the 800 number from your phone, enter your personal identification number, and you're connected! You then sit back and listen to the presentations and join in the lively Q&A discussion that follows.

TIME

All seminars are held from 1:00 - 2:30 pm US Eastern Time

UPCOMING SESSIONS

January 17, 2007 Presenter: Neil Perlin
The X Factor – From HTML to XHTML

January 31, 2007

Presenters: Elaine Wisniewski, Steven Hall
ANSI Z535.6 – A New Standard for Safety Information in Product-Accompanying Literature

February 7, 2007 Presenter: Heather Hedden
Creating Indexes on Web Sites and Intranets

February 21, 2007

Presenters: Melanie Doulton, Makarand Pandit
Working in Global Teams

COST

With a telephone seminar, the cost is per site, not per person. Train as many people as your conference room can hold — for one flat rate!

Members: \$99 / Non-members: \$149

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

<http://stc.webex.com/>

New STC IDL SIG Members – September, October, November 2006

Gillian Andersen	Rhonda Dunbar	Maureen King	Erika Norton	Megan Stegge
Jennifer Anderson	Keiran Dunne	Laura King-Moore	Wayne O'Brien	Carl Stokes
Susan Asistores	Lista Duren	Edward Kinsel	Edna Padilla	Kathy Stull
France Baril	David Edgell	Heather Kirby	Gary Page	Arthur Sweeney
Randall Barnett	Moira Enerva	Carolann Kowalski	Jean Painter	Frank Tagader
Jenna Bauer	Athena Epilepsia	Julie Landen	Jill Parman	Philip Tirelli
Elizabeth Benner	Janice Ewertsen	Sonia Lansberg	Sherry Pebworth	Pappi Tomas
Seymour Berg	Jonathan Finley	Sammy Lao	Elaine Pendergrast	Kristin Toms
Alisa Bown	Brian Fleming	Kara Le Treize	Cassandra Peterson	Stephan Tourville
Pam Brannen	Allison Flores	Liza Leif	Curtis Pittman	Angela Vasquez
Patricia Brogdon	Geri Foster	Elizabeth Leslie	Ashby Pollard	Lori Volheim
Keith Brooks	J Foster	Mary Ann Lightfoot	Alan Poynor	Patricia Wade
Nancy Brown	Joan Francuz	Jessica Loftis	Connie Raatz	John Waite
Klee Burke	Dishaa Ganapathy	Elaine MacNeill	John Raggio	Chanda Walker
Artemis Calogeros	Rachna Ganguli	Alexis Macpherson	Anuj Rathore	Carol Anne Wall
Lynn Campbell	Rachel Garwood	Tanvi Malhotra	Laura Reali	Diana Walther
Virginia Canil	Megan Gibson	Jonathan Mankin	Linda Record	Patrick Warren
Saul Carliner	Pamela Gilday	Travis Martin	Janette Reed	Diane Wolcott-
Jean Church	Zyppora Goldberg	Rowan Massing	Ryan Reed	Watson
Trish Chynoweth	Lauren Halyak	Julia McDonnell	Marilyn Reiher	Suzanne Webb
Michael Clark	Holly Harkness	Sandra Mckenzie	Betsy Richards	Jocolyn Weeks
Susan Clark	Nicole Harrison	Toni Mehling	Corona Rivera	Liz Weiman
Evelyn Clausnitzer	Susan Hendel	Lynn Merrill	Jo Rosen	Caryn Whitney
Joyce Cohen	Bill Henderson	Steve Metzler	Ann Salembier	Angela Wiens
Judith Corbin	Margaret Hirst	Ronald Milos	Otilia Sanchez	Julie Wildgen
Susan Culbreath	Elizabeth Holena	Heather Mitchell	Wendy Secrist	Julie Wilker
Ren Daigre	Karen Holmes	Linda Morgan	Mrittika Sen	Katherine Willing
Nita Daniel	John Hunt	Sharon Murphy	Thomas Sgrizzi	Nina Wishbow
Laurie D'Armien	Julie Jacobs	Michelle Murphy	Monica Sheldon	Ben Woelk
Roberta Davidson	Kristen Jensen	Karen Murri	Cynthia Silversides	Becky Wood
BethAnn Davis	Scott Jones	Angelina Nachimuthu	Sitaramachandra Sirupurapu	Carolyn Young
Deanna Dobrowolski	Deborah Jordan	Allan Nelms	Bryna Smith	Ana Young
Bobbie Dofflemyer	Elizabeth Kell	Nancy Nelson	Raymond Springer	Sangeeta Zilka
Terrance Downey	Wendy Keller	Belinda Nichols	Brian Stanko	Jean Zurface
Alida Droogendyk	Sam Kennedy	Kathryn Ninno	Megan Stegge	