

OTESSA 2025 Online Conference Program

Sep 24, 2026 @ 2:54 pm PDT (UTC-07:00)

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Welcome



Figure 1: OTESSA Logo

Times listed in this program are Pacific Daylight Time (Victoria, BC)

Victoria, BC

Santa Fe, NM

Toronto, ON

Part I

Online Sessions

Thursday, May 29

Times listed in this program are Pacific Daylight Time (Victoria, BC)

Victoria, BC

Santa Fe, NM

Toronto, ON

11:00 - 12:00 PDT | Keynote | Thomas Reeves

Reframing Togetherness: Shifting our Focus from Technology to Problems

Note

This session was recorded and the recording is available at the link below.

Link to Zoom Recording

Keeping in mind the overall theme of “Reframing Togetherness,” this presentation will emphasize the need to change the focus of our research in educational technology from “things” such as Generative AI or Virtual Reality to serious problems such as educational inequity or absenteeism. Unfortunately, much of our research continues to be focused on things rather than problems. Today, I will present an updated and more urgent perspective on this issue. I will recommend three important directions for research in our field.

1. We must conduct research in ways that influence practice.
2. Our research must rigorously account for time-on-task and other hidden factors.
3. Our research must clarify the nature of innovations using a common set of critical learning design factors.

Monday, June 2

Times listed in this program are Pacific Daylight Time (Victoria, BC)

Victoria, BC

Santa Fe, NM

Toronto, ON

[Link to Mattermost](#)

8:30 - 9:00 | Conference Welcome, Announcements, & Land Acknowledgement

9:00 - 10:00 | Keynote: Peter Scott | Multi-Laterally Open: A Commonwealth Story

Session available online in Zoom & HHB 105.

Abstract

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) was established in 1987 by the Heads of Government of what was then widely called the ‘Commonwealth of Nations’, as an intergovernmental agency tasked with helping member countries in the field of ‘Open Learning’. With Open and Distance learning, open technologies and resources, and a more digitalised, online world, becoming increasing the next normal, stakeholders in our 56 countries continue to make strides against learning inequity even as others choose step away from open, multi-lateral engagement. While there is very much yet still to do, we can note progress and consider why COL believes there is cause for optimism.

10:00 - 10:15 | Break

10:15 - 11:15 | Concurrent Session 1

All sessions available online in Zoom & CLE B007/B017.

Session 1.1

10:15 - 11:05 | Time Barriers for Adopting Digital Tools in Language Teachers' Practice

Research

Maryam Elshafei | *York University*

i Abstract

In language teaching, most research on educational technologies (edtech) focus on the positive potential and pedagogical value of using different edtech tools. At the same time, many studies have also reported time as a limiting factor for implementing edtech in the classroom. The role of time as a constraint for the adoption of edtech in language classrooms is usually under-discussed. Rather than addressing the potential burden of engaging with new technologies, many scholars investigating the impact of technology-mediated language learning seem to suggest that teachers do not adapt educational technologies due to deficits in teachers' skills. To promote alternative research agendas and institutional policies that forefront teachers, I will present the results of a literature review investigating how technology-aided language teaching can impact a teacher's time inside and outside the classroom. Recommendations for improved edtech uptake that respect teachers' time are also discussed.

Session 1.2a

10:15 - 10:35 | Reframing Presence in Fully Online Learning: Embracing Imagination, the More-than-human, and Sustainability

Practice

Susanna Kohonen | *University of Eastern Finland*

Abstract

In the context of fully online learning, higher education students have been found to struggle with feelings of isolation, lack of experience of presence, and lack of meaningful connections. These in turn have a negative effect on learning outcomes. To tackle these challenges, the presentation proposes drawing on posthumanist and socio-materialist thought. How to foster a sense of presence and togetherness in digital learning spaces is a question many online teachers, including myself, find challenging to answer. Are synchronous online sessions the only plausible option? This presentation aims to challenge our imagination by reflecting on both theoretical underpinnings and practical steps for educators to create more inclusive online learning environments that may enable opportunities for experiencing presence, ultimately aiming to reframe the concept of togetherness in fully online education.

Session 1.2c

10:55 - 11:15 | “Generating” Equity? Why Generative AI-Powered Education Necessitates Integration of Critical Algorithm Studies

Research

Fatima Zohra | *University of Waterloo*

Abstract

To what extent do AI-powered technologies threaten to exacerbate existing societal inequities? This presentation examines three core areas through which Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) can pose detrimental harms for society: (1) AI “hallucinations” and mis/disinformation; (2) mass data collection; (3) biased prompt engineering. These examinations culminate in the proposition that the integration of GenAI in education requires a simultaneous integration of critical algorithm studies so students (and educators) are well-versed in the nuances of GenAI ethics – particularly in regard to Open Educational Resources (OER) and Open Educational Practices (OEP). By providing practical recommendations for GenAI integration through sample demonstrations, activities, and case studies that can be conducted in the classroom, this presentation underscores that the GenAI “hype” which is grounded in the promise of objectivity, efficiency, and scalability must be critically evaluated given the high stakes of equity involved. Examining how such technological infrastructures are (re)shaping pedagogy – and education more broadly – is critical for addressing how the lack of rigorous regulation of these technologies threatens to exacerbate existing inequities and obstruct the democratization of knowledge.

11:15 - 11:45 | Break

11:45 - 12:45 | Concurrent Session 2

All sessions available online in Zoom & CLE B007/B017.

Session 2.2a

11:45 - 12:05 | Exploring the Alignment of Design Principles for K-12 Online Learning with Researched Models and Standards: Principles to Guide Engaging and Supportive Online Learning

Research

Randy LaBonte | *CANeLearn*; **Elizabeth Childs** | *Royal Roads University* & **Michael Barbour**

i Abstract

In 2023, researchers explored the relationship between *Design Principles for K-12 Online Learning* (Crichton & Author, 2022) and quality standards for K-12 online learning, publishing a report on the intersection between design principles and standards (Author et al., 2023). Design principles refer to the fundamental concepts and guidelines that inform the creation and implementation of educational programs, materials, and systems (Kukulska-Hulme & Traxler, 2013), while standards tend to be more discrete, flexible, and responsive to local conditions (Bell, 2000). In 2024, the Community of Inquiry (Garrison et al., 2000) was explored as a research-based framework for the design principles, given the model was used for the published standards for K-12 online learning (BC Ministry of Education, 2021). The study built off the OTESSA 2024 presentation and proceedings paper, analyzing intersection points between the COI and design principles. The analysis led to a potential model to guide the development of engaging and supportive online learning. Researchers plan to share it with online educators and revise the model and the design principles. It is hoped that basing design principles in the context of a research-based model will further develop an understanding of quality in K-12 online learning and inform K-12 online practice.

Session 2.2b

12:05 - 12:25 | Yes, You Can: Research With Adult Trauma Survivors Who Learn Online Practice

i Abstract

Trauma-informed educational practices are rapidly gaining traction in higher education, with increasing interest from faculty and staff, administrators, and government policy-makers. While the volume of scholarly publications in this area has increased over the past few years, literature on trauma-informed pedagogy and practice in higher education continues to consist primarily of practitioner reflections, with a paucity of empirical research (Anderson et al., 2023). As far as I am aware, my own publications (Schmidt, 2023, 2024, in press) comprise the first peer-reviewed research to examine trauma-informed practice for open/online higher education. Given survivors' preference for hybrid and online learning (Werkmeister, 2024), the relative lack of research in this area represents a troubling gap. Particularly concerning is the dearth of scholarly literature that centres survivors, contradicting the fundamental principle of collaboration in a trauma-informed approach.

This session aims to support researchers considering projects that centre adult trauma survivors who learn in open/online settings. Using SAMHSA's (2014) guidelines for trauma-informed practice, the session dispels myths, dismantles barriers, and provides practical guidance for implementing respectful, collaborative research relations with survivors, ensuring safety for researchers and participants, and attaining institutional research ethics board approval.

12:45 - 1:00 | Break

1:00- 2:30 | Networking Online

Tuesday, June 3

Times listed in this program are Pacific Daylight Time (Victoria, BC)

Victoria, BC

Santa Fe, NM

Toronto, ON

10:00 - 11:00 PDT | Keynote | James Slotta - Critical Action Learning: Empowering Students with Meaning and Purpose in 21st Century Classrooms

Session available online in Zoom & HHB 105.

Abstract

This presentation will review my previous work in pedagogies for learning communities, including the use of “smart classroom” technologies to support collective inquiry and scaffold students and teachers. It will then introduce Critical Action Learning, as an international professional learning community of teachers. I will present the CALE design framework, pedagogical approaches, and present several examples of teacher enactments. I will also discuss new roles for physical classroom space and technology environments.

11:00 - 11:15 | Break

11:15 - 12:15 | Concurrent Session 3

All sessions available online in Zoom & CLE B007/B017.

Session 3.1

11:15 - 12:05 | Integrating Artificial Intelligence into a Community of Inquiry: The Roles of AI

Practice

Hyeyung Park | *Athabasca University*

Abstract

The Fifth Industrial Revolution (5IR) highlights the collaboration between humans and technology, emphasizing sustainability, human-centeredness, and environmental responsibility. Artificial intelligence (AI) is a transformative force reshaping instructional design by partnering with learners, addressing individual needs, and fostering personalized learning. This research explores AI applications in instructional design and strategies to overcome challenges in AI integration. Using a three-level model as a learning theory, it examines the roles of AI for individual, team and organizational learning. Furthermore, this study provides practical insights for integrating AI into a community of inquiry (CoI) framework to enhance learning design. The dearth of research on the roles of AI within the CoI framework has made it difficult for practitioners to employ AI in instructional strategies effectively. This paper addresses this gap by proposing AI roles grounded in a three-level model and offering practical insights on integrating AI into a CoI framework. Ultimately, it empowers practitioners to leverage AI effectively, maximize its potential benefits, and address challenges proactively through a theory-informed approach.

Session 3.2a

11:15 - 11:35 | Addressing the Assumption that Online Learning is Intuitive: An OER for Learning to Learn Online

Practice

Kristin Petrovic et al., Lynn Corcoran, Emily Doyle & Terra Murray | *Athabasca University*

Abstract

Primary and secondary schooling in North America is generally situated around the traditional model of in-person teaching and learning. As such, when entering post-secondary education, most people already have a sense of how to learn in the place-based setting. However, if moving to a different mode of education, such as the online

environment, it is essential to support the necessary shift in understanding how to learn within this context.

To meet the needs of those learning to learn online, faculty from programs including Counseling Psychology and Undergraduate and Graduate Nursing in the Faculty of Health Disciplines at Athabasca University collaborated to adapt an e-book open educational resource (OER) to facilitate how to adjust and thrive in the online learning environment. In this presentation, we share the overall aim of adapting this OER, the main topics addressed in the e-book, as well as processes and practices that the faculty implemented as they collaborated to develop and adapt this resource. Finally, we share recommendations related to supporting learners to learn online as well as our strategies for addressing the pragmatic aspects of adapting an OER for use across different programs in an online post-secondary environment.

Session 3.2b

11:35 - 11:55 | Creating Whiteboard Animations to Explain Tooth Microanatomy

Practice

Nazlee Sharmin & Ava K Chow | *University of Alberta*

Abstract

The knowledge of tooth microanatomy is a cornerstone of dental education. However, teaching this complex concept in an engaging manner is challenging for many educators. The rapid development of digital instructional tools has enormous potential for the design and development of engaging and effective teaching resources; whiteboard animation is one of them. Whiteboard animation is a style of animated video where the content appears to be hand-drawn on a whiteboard and narrated in a storytelling manner. This technique has the benefits of traditional animations, with the added ability to combine visual thinking and storytelling.

We have used a graphics editor, Procreate, and an animation maker, VideoScribe to create whiteboard animations for the students in the Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) program at the University of Alberta. An anonymous survey was also conducted to explore students' experiences with the animations as learning tools. Fifty-three percent of the DDS class (n = 17) participated in the survey. Most survey participants (82%) agreed or strongly agreed that the whiteboard animations helped clarify concepts for them.

Session 3.2c

11:55 - 12:15 | Developing a Mobile App for Oral Histology

Practice

Nazlee Sharmin, Hady Abdallah, Elias Jirgees & Ava K Chow | *University of Alberta*

Abstract

m-Learning is gaining popularity in health professional education; however, reports on mobile apps targeting didactic teaching and learning of histology are scarce. Histology is an essential foundational component of dental and medical education. At the Mike Petryk School of Dentistry, University of Alberta, instructors use photomicrographs from textbooks to teach students the microanatomy of teeth, the development of tooth and facial regions, and developmental anomalies. The lack of high-quality tissue sections and insufficient class time challenge both students and instructors. To provide students with an accessible collection of diverse histological sections and to facilitate in-class didactic teaching, we developed an Augmented Reality (AR)-based mobile app called Tooth ARcademy. This app has three modes. The instructors can use the AR-based Learn mode to create in-class activities and supplemental questions for students with specific learning outcomes. The Practice mode enables students to study oral histology outside of class time. With the Quiz mode of Tooth ARcademy, students can self-assess their knowledge of oral histology by participating in quizzes. The knowledge of histology is essential for dental education. We believe Tooth ARcademy will be a valuable m-learning tool benefiting dental students and educators.

12:15 - 12:45 | Break

12:45 - 1:45 | Concurrent Session 4

All sessions available online in Zoom & CLE B007/B017.

Session 4.1a

12:45 - 1:05 | Mid-American Conference Websites and Student Well-Being: A Content Analysis

Research

Hui Zhan | *Ohio University*

Abstract

This study examines how the twelve universities within the Mid-American Conference (MAC) use their websites to communicate the components of well-being outlined in the inter-association definition. Using content analysis, the findings show that institutions prioritize aspects of individual well-being, such as happiness and self-esteem, alongside community-oriented themes like inclusivity and shared purpose. However, the analysis also highlights inconsistencies, with some universities excelling in areas like subjective well-being while underemphasizing civic engagement and systemic equity. These results underline the importance of a more balanced approach to presenting well-being initiatives online. Future efforts should focus on refining digital communication strategies to align institutional well-being goals more closely with the inter-association framework, ensuring a more comprehensive and cohesive representation of student and community well-being.

Session 4.1b

1:05 - 1:25 | How Are Post-Secondary Educators Navigating the AI Revolution?

Research

Adam Vanzella Yang | *The Conference Board of Canada*

Abstract

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) promises to reshape how we teach and learn. Yet, little is known about how educators are navigating the AI revolution. In this study, we discuss findings from a national survey of post-secondary educators in Canada (N=402). We found that most educators have neither explicitly permitted nor prohibited student use of AI tools. Notably, 80% reported not receiving any formal guidance or training from their institutions. There is a strong demand for professional development in this area, with educators seeking training for both themselves and their students. Key concerns about generative AI include its potential for facilitating cheating, the submission of unoriginal work, and its impact on students' critical thinking and independent learning. However, educators are more open to the use of AI for secondary tasks such as translation, general research and knowledge acquisition, and grammar assistance. Educators who use generative AI more frequently tend to be more optimistic about its potential, although they remain wary of its ethical implications and possible threats to the integrity and reliability of knowledge. Overall, educator attitudes toward AI are complex and multifaceted. To effectively integrate AI, institutions must consider the diverse needs of different disciplines, professional practices, and individual experiences with this technology.

Session 4.2

12:45 - 1:45 | Designing Calm: Reducing Learner Anxiety with H5P in Digital OER Textbooks

60 Minute Workshop

Theresa Huff | *Loyola Marymount University*

Abstract

Anxiety in online learning is a significant barrier to student success, yet thoughtful design of digital course materials can foster a more inclusive and supportive environment. In this interactive workshop, participants will explore how H5P, a free and open-source tool, can be used to reduce learner anxiety through accessible, visually engaging content, formative activities, and reflective practices in digital OER textbooks.

Grounded in original research findings, this session will highlight how applying multimedia principles—such as segmenting, emotional design, feedback, and generative activities—can meaningfully lower learner anxiety. Participants will examine examples of course materials that integrate H5P for diverse purposes, including presenting content visually, promoting deeper reflection, and supporting active engagement. A hands-on segment will guide attendees through creating their own H5P types, with options to follow along or observe. Discussions will center on how these techniques build supportive, inclusive, and calm digital learning spaces, fostering a sense of togetherness by addressing common learner challenges.

By the end of this session, attendees will gain actionable design principles, practical H5P techniques, and strategies for rethinking instructional design to support student well-being in online learning environments.

1:45 - 2:00 | Break

2:00 - 3:00 | Concurrent Session 5

All sessions available online in Zoom & CLE B007/B017.

Session 5.1

2:00 - 2:50 | Speculation: Shaping the Future of Education

Practice

i Abstract

Speculation is a powerful tool for shaping the future and has significant potential in education. This workshop will introduce the concept of speculative storytelling, drawing heavily on the work of Octavia Butler (2000) and Donna Haraway (2021) as well as speculative design methodologies (Dunne & Raby, 2013), future-making from design anthropology (Akama et al., 2018) and speculative education fiction from critical education studies (Houlden & Veletsianos, 2023; Krutka et al., 2021). We will look at how speculation has been used in various contexts as a tool for future-making and design and discuss specifically how it can be a useful tool for creating the futures that we want (and need) in higher education.

Participants will engage in reflection and micro-storytelling activities throughout the session, providing them with tools for speculative thought and empowering them to contribute to future-making in their own contexts.

Session 5.2

2:00 - 2:50 | Transformative Digital Accessibility and Post-Secondary Teaching Praxis

Workshop or Demo

Kim Ashbourne & Michael Paskevicius | *University of Victoria*

i Abstract

Digital accessibility is more than a technical/compliance issue. It is a dynamic sociocultural phenomenon that occurs when people with disabilities, and those using assistive technologies, can equitably and agentively: find, understand, navigate, engage in, and contribute to information sharing, information production, and sociocultural experience sharing in digital environments with others (Author, 2025; Web Accessibility Initiative, n.d.) The technical/compliance framing typically encountered in post-secondary has done educators and learners a disservice by focusing on the “requirements” rather than on inclusion and transformative learning experiences.

What might change if we as educators set aside the technical/compliance lens and look at digital accessibility through a pedagogical lens? This workshop builds on two emergent themes in literature exploring pedagogical considerations relative to digital accessibility. Theme #1: There is a small but growing body of research pointing us toward a transformative digital accessibility praxis (Author, 2025). Theme #2 A transformative digital praxis can be motivated by your personal pedagogical approach (Melonçon, 2018; Oswal & Melonçon, 2017). This interactive workshop will draw on liberatory pedagogical

perspectives and a Disability Justice lens. Participants will leave with tools to build a personal plan to develop a pedagogically-motivated, transformative digital accessibility praxis.

Wednesday, June 4

Times listed in this program are Pacific Daylight Time (Victoria, BC)

Victoria, BC

Santa Fe, NM

Toronto, ON

[Link to Mattermost](#)

10:00 - 11:00 PDT | Keynote | Anatoliy Gruzd - From Prompt to Propaganda: How Generative AI Fuels Disinformation and Misinformation and What We Must Do

Session available online in Zoom & HHB 105.

i Abstract

Social platforms now algorithmically remix news, memes, and AI-generated content, blurring the line between fact and fiction, and obscuring traditional credibility cues (e.g., source reputation, visual authenticity, consensus). According to a new report, *The State of Generative AI Use in Canada 2025*, from the Social Media Lab at Toronto Metropolitan University, 59 percent of Canadians distrust political news online because it may be fake or manipulated, with two-thirds fearing that generative AI could sway elections. Yet paradoxically, students and faculty are embracing these same generative AI tools for study and research support. This apparent disconnect between public concerns and uptake of these tools demands closer scrutiny. The keynote will examine the features that enable the rapid adoption of generative AI tools by the public on the one hand, and how those same features allow bad actors to create and disseminate dis- and misinformation at scale on the other. The talk will conclude with a call for actionable research and policy focused on strengthening “epistemic resilience” among students, researchers, and the broader public through critical digital literacy, robust verification practices, and institutional safeguards that ensure the safe and ethical use of generative AI.

11:00 - 11:15 | Break

11:15 - 12:15 | Keynote | Laura Czerniewicz, Catherine Cronin, Helen Beetham - Addressing Challenges to Open Education in an Era of Authoritarianism and Big Tech

Session available online in Zoom & HHB 105.

i Abstract

Open education and openness in general are dealing with multiple crises, including perhaps an identity crisis. How does openness speak to the current moment in education? What resources can it bring? This talk will open up some of these big questions by focusing on three areas:

1. How does open intersect with the democratic crisis affecting education?
2. Where in the AI stack can open education find a hold?
3. What is the place of openness in debates about AI and copyright?

12:15 - 12:45 | Break

12:45 - 1:45 | Concurrent Session 6

All sessions available online in Zoom & CLE B007/B017.

(60 mins)

Session 6.1a

12:45 - 1:05 | MicroDesign in Open/Higher Education

Practice

Hilary Schmidt & Stephen Doubt | *Thompson Rivers University*

i Abstract

Microlearning is an established technique for learning and development in many workplaces, with the recognition that busy professionals face constraints on their learning time. A

microlearning approach is both convenient and effective; it can enhance learning outcomes, improve retention of information and skills, and reduce cognitive load by delivering information in digestible, focused segments (Taylor & Hung, 2022). However, the adoption of microlearning in academic contexts, for both faculty and students, has been limited (Corbeil & Corbeil, 2023; Lockley, 2024).

Recognizing the benefits of a microlearning approach, we created a suite of asynchronous online microlearning lessons (MicroDesign), enabling busy faculty members to grasp fundamentals of open/online course development in interactive, asynchronous online lessons of 5 minutes or less. In the session, we will share an example: a high quality, interactive microlearning lesson that explores copyright compliance (a critical responsibility for course developers, particularly in an open learning context).

We will discuss the technology used to build and host the microlearning, provide other examples of microlearning designed for a postsecondary audience, and share a template to guide participants' planning of their own microlearning possibilities (either as standalone lessons or embedded within larger courses).

Session 6.1b

1:05 - 1:25 | Virtual Reality Museums: Redefining Engagement and Understanding in Cultural Heritage

Practice

Yuning Gao | *New York University*

Abstract

This session explores the development of a Virtual Reality (VR) museum dedicated to the banjo, tracing its cultural and historical significance. Designed as part of a graduate research project, this immersive learning environment aims to enhance accessibility, engagement, and storytelling within digital museum experiences. By leveraging design thinking principles, 3D modeling, and interactive elements, the VR museum bridges gaps in traditional curation, offering visitors an enriched, self-guided exploration of the instrument's evolution and social impact. The presentation will outline key phases of the project—from initial research and prototyping to user testing and iteration—highlighting both challenges and unexpected insights. Rooted in a commitment to inclusivity and experiential learning, this work aligns with the conference theme, Reframing Togetherness, by fostering new ways of connecting with history, technology, and diverse audiences. Attendees will gain practical takeaways for integrating VR into educational and cultural spaces, as well as insights into designing immersive experiences that prioritize accessibility and engagement.

Session 6.1c

1:25 - 1:45 | Exploring Students' Perceptions, Practices, and Training Needs Regarding Generative AI

Research

Marta Samokishyn & Victoria Tsonos | *Saint Paul University*

Abstract

The rapid popularity and adoption of generative AI tools are transforming how students learn, research, and create. Generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Copilot, and Gemini, are becoming ubiquitous in educational environments, yet little is known about how university students use them. This study investigates students' use, attitudes, and beliefs surrounding these powerful technologies, aiming to identify critical gaps in understanding, perceived challenges, and necessary training interventions. Our research addresses several key questions: (1) How are students currently utilizing generative AI in their academic work? (2) What are their perceptions of the benefits and risks associated with these tools? (3) What misconceptions or knowledge gaps exist regarding the functionality, limitations, and ethical implications of generative AI? (4) What challenges do students face in effectively and ethically integrating these tools into their learning processes? Finally, (5) what targeted training and support structures are needed to empower students to leverage the potential of generative AI responsibly and effectively? This presentation will provide actionable insights for educators, librarians, and administrators seeking to address students' use of AI in educational environments and explore what training opportunities would benefit students at this time.

1:45 - 2:00 | Break

2:00 - 3:00 | Concurrent Session 7

All sessions available online in Zoom & CLE B007/B017.

Session 7.1

2:00 - 2:50 | Exploring the Intersection of Agriculture, Technology, and Game-Based Learning

Workshop

i Abstract

This conference session, “Exploring the Intersection of Agriculture, Technology, and Game-Based Learning: Empowering Students to Investigate Beneficial Pollinator Bugs with Minecraft Education,” will delve into the innovative integration of agriculture and technology through game-based learning (GBL). Recognizing the critical role of pollinator bugs in agriculture, this session will demonstrate how Minecraft Education can be leveraged as a powerful tool to engage students in understanding and preserving these essential species. Participants will experience a live demo play of the designated Minecraft Education adventure, showcasing how interactive gameplay can simulate real-world agricultural environments. This immersive experience will allow students to investigate the life cycles, habitats, and contributions of pollinator bugs to ecosystems and food production. The session will also cover strategic and beneficial note-taking methods to enhance learning outcomes. Attendees will explore practical strategies for educators to incorporate technology and GBL into their curricula, fostering student engagement and enhancing STEM education. By blending these elements, educators can inspire students to develop a deeper appreciation for environmental sustainability and agricultural science, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to address future challenges in food security and biodiversity conservation. Attendees will leave with actionable insights and resources to implement this innovative approach in their own educational settings.

Session 7.2

2:00 - 2:50 | Educational Pathways to Access, Support, Hope, Transformation, and Opportunities

Practice

Hafizullah Abram, Paula MacDowell & Marguerite Koole | *University of Saskatchewan*

i Abstract

In August 2021, the Taliban returned to power in Afghanistan. Their policies resulted in 1.4 million girls losing access to education (Pan, 2023) with both secondary and tertiary education forbidden. While access to primary education is permitted, 30% of young girls never attend for sociocultural, economic, and safety reasons. Female teachers and professors are no longer permitted to work. The humanitarian costs of barring women and girls from basic education is significant on personal, social, and economic levels. Distance education and generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) could offer some pragmatic solutions. “Artificial intelligence refers to the ability of computer systems to

mimic human intelligence” (Bowen and Watson, 2024, p. 16). Generative means that “they can produce novel outputs of the same general kind as their [large language model] training data” (Vallor, 2024, p. 19). GenAI could provide a way to interact and practice language skills, receive personalized feedback, and access educational content tailored to individual needs. Any solutions to the problem of access to education must address the current socio-cultural, political, economic, geographic, and infrastructural conditions of Afghanistan. With this in mind, we will not only explore GenAI opportunities but also the risks for Afghan women and girls—including the risk of doing nothing (Abram, 2025).

3:00 - 3:15 | Break

3:15 - 3:30 | Online Conference Closing with Jon Dron

Part II

Streamed from Victoria and Toronto

Thursday, June 5

Times listed in this program are Pacific Daylight Time (Victoria, BC)

Victoria, BC

Santa Fe, NM

Toronto, ON

9:30 - 10:00 | Conference Welcome, Announcements, & Land Acknowledgement

10:00 - 11:00 PDT | Keynote | Jennifer Wemigwans - Digital Bundles

Session available online in Zoom & HHB 105.

Abstract

Reflecting Indigenous Knowledge online has the potential to transform education across Canada. In this talk, Dr Wemigwans explores how to ethically present Indigenous Knowledge online through the creation of Digital Bundles. FourDirectionsTeachings.com is an example of a Digital Bundle, an online site where Elders' Teachings from five distinct First Nations are presented. Digital Bundles represent a way to transform and reframe education by using new technologies to articulate Indigenous Teachings and introduce Canadians to Indigenous epistemologies.

11:00 - 11:15 | Break

11:15 - 12:15 | Concurrent Session 8

All sessions also available online in Zoom.

Session 8.1a

Location: CLE B007

11:15 - 11:35 | Creating Capacity for Digital Transformation

Research

Leah Macfadyen | *University of British Columbia*; **Seyyed Kazem Banihashem** | *Open University of the Netherlands* & **Rhiannon Lewis** | *University of British Columbia*

Abstract

Globally, the demand for online education has surged, driven by the need for flexible and accessible learning (Johnson, 2023; Quality Matters, 2023) and dramatically escalated by the COVID-19 pandemic (Cui et al. 2022). In 2024, Cui et al. noted that doctoral level education in educational technology will “build critical capacity for leading research and driving transformation in policy and practice”. In this study we contend that while doctoral-level expertise and leadership is vital, it is widespread access to flexible post-graduate education and training for current and upcoming educators and practitioners that will support system-wide upskilling for ongoing digital transformation. In 2019, and in 2024, we surveyed the global landscape of masters-level education related to educational technologies and digital learning. Currently, 39 institutions offer 65 master’s degree programs in this field. Surprisingly, only eight new master’s degree programs in educational technology launched globally, post-pandemic. However, we did discover extensive curricular rebalancing. Here, we report on the current state of master’s level education in educational technology, curricular expansions in topic areas that including management, planning and leadership, research methods, technical aspects of design, data and analytics, emerging issues & technologies, and instructional strategies, and we consider how these reflect current educational needs.

Session 8.1b

Location: CLE B007

11:35 - 12:55 | Keeping it Together: Exploring Student Experiences in Multi-Access Learning Environments

Research

Valerie Irvine & Mariel Miller | *University of Victoria*

i Abstract

Shifts in the educational landscape toward more online learning opportunities has put pressure on brick-and-mortar programs to recruit learners from a smaller pool seeking in-person, on-campus instruction. Post-secondary institutions have little capacity to offer a parallel offering of courses and programs, necessitating either increased online offerings or embedding online access into traditionally on-campus programs. However, literature around merging modalities identifies challenges with remote learners' sense of belonging necessitating further examination of learner experience in merging modality contexts (Purnama, 2023). In this session, we will present a descriptive phenomenological study of learners' lived experience of multi-access learning in a two-year Master's project-based program that brought together both local learners and remote online learners into the same cohort. Data sources included semi-structured phenomenological interviews used to gain in-depth understanding of learners' experiences learning in multi-access courses during their completion of the educational technology master program. Findings revealed four key themes regarding learner experience. Recommendations for the design and implementation of multi-access learning are discussed.

Session 8.2

Location: CLE B017

11:15 - 12:05 | Assessment for Equity: Openness and DEI in your Grading Architecture

Workshop

Colin Madland | *University of Victoria* & **Jess Mitchell** | *Ontario College of Art and Design University*

i Abstract

This workshop will provide an overview of how you can use your grading architecture (how you lead learners through activities that support their learning, and ultimately, how you arrive at a final grade) to support greater equity using openness and DEI in your assessment practice. Equity is compromised when grades are assigned based on anything other than what a learner knows or can do (e.g., arbitrary due dates, punitive policies, etc.). Openness is compromised when learners, instructors, or other stakeholders do not fully understand the meaning and implications of the grades that are assigned. Bring your syllabus and join us as we explore ways to build assessment architectures that ensure grades are assigned according to what learners know and that learners understand how to progress in their learning journey based on the feedback you provide. We will discuss

the purposes of assessment, sources of inequity in grading and how to overcome them, effective communication of feedback, instructor workload, and resources to assist you in your journey into alt-grading practices that meet you where you are.

12:15 - 1:30 | Lunch

1:30 - 2:30 PDT | Keynote | George Veletsianos - What Might/Could/Should Education Look Like in 2035?

Session presented from Minnesota, available online in Zoom & HHB 110.

i Abstract

Our societies face economic, demographic, political, environmental, and social challenges, which have resulted in numerous organizations publishing reports calling for brighter education futures. In this interactive keynote, we will envision teaching and learning across diverse contexts in 2035 using a collection of “what if” scenario cards which introduce conundrums, opportunities, and challenges. Through rapid ideation and peer sharing, we will explore multiple education futures, all in the spirit of recognizing the forces that shape and constrain our imagination of what education could be.

2:30 - 2:45 | Break

2:45 - 3:45 | Concurrent Session 9

All sessions also available online in Zoom.

Session 9.1a

Location: CLE B007

2:45 - 3:05 | The Social Representations of Parents from Rural Backgrounds Regarding the Use and Access to Digital Technologies Among Their Children and Adolescents

Research

Pascal Gauthier, Eve Pouliot & Patrick Giroux | *Université du Québec à Chicoutimi*

Abstract

From the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, digital technologies proved to be essential for the functioning of society (INSPQ, 2021). However, behind the apparent “hyperconnectivity” of young people, they are not exempt from digital inequalities (CEFRIO, 2017), and most importantly, they are not innate experts in these technologies (Yagoubi, 2020). Moreover, parents are the closest authority figures to young people regarding the “virtual world” (Reginasari et al., 2021). On the other hand, they may experience a certain ambivalence towards digital technology. Using the conceptual framework of social representations (Moscovici, 1961, 1976), this qualitative research, originating from a master’s thesis in social work, analyzes the discourse of 10 parents living in rural areas of Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results indicate that they acquired knowledge of videoconferencing, which allowed them to continue their daily lives and ensure their children’s education. Some were able to develop a more positive attitude towards technology, while others experienced exhaustion or fatigue related to digital usage. Additionally, parents have a techno-deterministic view of digital technology and remain under the impression that young people have abilities they themselves do not possess (the “digital native” myth). This study can help professionals better understand the digital issues faced by parents and integrate them into their practice, whether in social work or the educational field.

Session 9.1b

Location: CLE B007

3:05 - 3:25 | Digital Learning for Innovative Teaching: Adopting a Competency-Based Approach

Practice

Tanya Elias | *University of Calgary*

Abstract

The Digital Learning Competency Framework developed at Vancouver Community College organizes 21 discrete competencies into three categories and seven sub-categories. Together, these competencies delineate essential digital knowledge, skills and attitudes for instructors and other learning practitioners. Each competency is further defined at four levels of proficiency so that all learning practitioners, regardless of their starting point, can easily engage in meaningful and applied learning paths aligned with their specific needs. These competencies are now being used to develop a Digital Learning For Innovative Teaching (DLIT) microcredential that will offer formal, for credit online learning opportunities with recognition via digital badges and a short certificate. There is also future potential for the Digital Learning Competency Framework, and an associated open challenge bank, to be used to develop and recognize less formal digital learning professional development via portfolio assessment, workshops and other formats. This session discusses the Digital Learning Competency Framework development process, its current uses and the potential to extend its use over time.

Session 9.2

Location: CLE B017

2:45 - 3:35 | Integrating Artificial Intelligence into a Community of Inquiry: The Roles of AI

Practice

Hyeyung Park | *Athabasca University*

Abstract

The Fifth Industrial Revolution (5IR) highlights the collaboration between humans and technology, emphasizing sustainability, human-centeredness, and environmental responsibility. Artificial intelligence (AI) is a transformative force reshaping instructional design by partnering with learners, addressing individual needs, and fostering personalized learning. This research explores AI applications in instructional design and strategies to overcome challenges in AI integration. Using a three-level model as a learning theory, it examines the roles of AI for individual, team and organizational learning. Furthermore, this study provides practical insights for integrating AI into a community of inquiry (CoI) framework to enhance learning design. The dearth of research on the roles of AI within the CoI framework has made it difficult for practitioners to employ AI in instructional strategies effectively. This paper addresses this gap by proposing AI roles grounded in a

three-level model and offering practical insights on integrating AI into a CoI framework. Ultimately, it empowers practitioners to leverage AI effectively, maximize its potential benefits, and address challenges proactively through a theory-informed approach.

3:45 - 4:00 | Break

4:00 - 5:00 | Concurrent Session 10

All sessions also available online in Zoom.

Session 10.1a

Location: CLE B007

4:00 - 4:20 | Exploring the Opportunities and Limitations of Immersive Technologies in Education

Research

Jangchu Tenzin | *University of New Brunswick*

Abstract

The rapid advancement of immersive technologies, including virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and mixed reality (MR), has transformed educational practices by enhancing engagement, providing interactive learning environments, and enabling the visualization of complex concepts. This presentation examines the opportunities and limitations of these technologies through the lens of media ecology, exploring their effects on pedagogical practices and meaning-making processes. While immersive technologies offer new possibilities for personalized and experiential learning, they also introduce challenges such as cognitive overload, accessibility barriers, and pedagogical biases. Drawing on a comprehensive literature review, this study highlights the dual nature of immersive media as both extensions of human capabilities and potential constraints on traditional learning processes. The findings underscore the need for carefully designed pedagogical frameworks that maximize the benefits of immersive technologies while mitigating their drawbacks. By critically analyzing the role of these tools in education, this presentation contributes to a deeper understanding of how immersive technologies mediate human experience and reshape learning environments. This presentation hopes to engage educators, researchers,

and practitioners in critical discussions on the implications of immersive learning technologies, aligning with OTESSA's focus on openness, technology, and education. It emphasizes the importance of evidence-based approaches to integrating these tools in ways that foster equitable, engaging, and pedagogically sound learning experiences.

Session 10.1b

Location: CLE B007

4:20 - 4:40 | 3D Printing Resources for the Elementary Classroom

Research

Brittany Johnson & Krystal Yang | *University of Victoria*

Abstract

The project focuses on meeting the needs of educators to feel empowered to use digital tools such as 3D printing in their practice. 3D Technology is constantly evolving and there is a current lack of resources and training available to support teachers with 3D printing. Teachers seeking support often search for community; as such the focus of this document and resource are to inform and equip teachers with the necessary skills, confidence and easily implementable lessons and practices. This resource has been shared through an Open Educational resource repository and licensed with Creative Commons, making them widely available and adaptable to teachers, staff, students and the greater learning community. Our research acknowledges digital literacy considerations; Communities of Practice; experiential learning; constructivism; professional development best practices; elementary education, secondary education, and makerspace; and the purpose of 3D printing in elementary are further explored throughout this research paper. Chapter three includes a professional development presentation, pre-workshop activities and understandings of 3D printing, lessons, ready to go activities as well as supplementary handouts for people interested in 3D printing. In order for teachers to feel confident and well supported to put theory into practice, we also designed online forum-style communities that foster communication between users looking for commonalities, solutions, and feedback on their learning. All in all, the goal of our project is to support teachers wanting to implement 3D printing into classrooms and ease the students into technology.

Session 10.2

Location: CLE B017

4:00 - 4:50 | AI, Oh My! Teaching, Cheating, and Surviving the ChatGPT Era

Research

Jill Robinson, Jhotisha Mugon, Jessica Rourke | *University of Victoria*

Abstract

The widespread gain in popularity of artificial intelligence, such as ChatGPT, has taken higher education by storm. This has resulted in instructors adapting their pedagogical approach, feeling pressured to continuously make changes to assessments and the ways in which they engage students. Instructors and students express various sentiments about AI, ranging from positive beliefs and excitement, to fear and uncertainty. In this session we will present concerns about the use of AI in the classroom, challenges to implementation of AI, and solutions focusing on the ethical and pedagogical use of AI in higher education. Using data from a survey of university instructors, we will present themes from a qualitative analysis of responses to several AI and teaching-related questions, examining such things as familiarity with AI, supports needed for implementation, and trends across courses. We will also consider ethical implications and unintended consequences of technological interventions, emphasizing the importance of aligning digital tools with pedagogical goals. We discuss literature related to student engagement, academic integrity, and the evolving role of AI in education. By combining real-world perspectives from faculty with a critical review of emerging solutions, we aim to provide a balanced perspective on integrating AI technology into teaching pedagogy.

5:00 - 5:30 | Travel Break

5:30 - Late | Off Site Social Event

Location: Sticky Wicket Rooftop Patio, Downtown Victoria :::

Friday, June 6

Times listed in this program are Pacific Daylight Time (Victoria, BC)

Victoria, BC

Santa Fe, NM

Toronto, ON

9:10 - 10:10 PDT | Presidential Address | Valerie Irvine (UVic) & Stephanie Moore (UNM)

Online in Zoom & HHB 110

10:15 - 11:15 PDT | Keynote | Jean-Paul Restoule - Considerations for Indigenous Centred Online Course Design

Session available in person in HHB 110 & online in Zoom

i Abstract

Indigenous people are keen to adopt and adapt technologies for their own uses and purposes yet have less success in controlling and creating technologies that dominate the learning landscape. What are some ways that Indigenous people approach open, distance and digital education? Restoule will share some observations of the potentials, constraints and cautions Indigenous people have expressed regarding online learning, with reference to relationality, authenticity, and learning design.

11:15 - 11:30 | Break

11:30 - 12:30 | Concurrent Session 11

All sessions also available online in Zoom

Session 11.1a

Location: CLE B017

11:30 - 11:50 | Instructional Design Analytics in Practice: Converting a Multi-Course Graduate Bridging Program from Blended-Synchronous to Blended-Asynchronous Delivery Using Risk-Based and Qualitative Research Techniques

Practice

Deborah Exelby | *Athabasca University*

i Abstract

Identifying which synchronous teaching-learning activities in a blended learning program should/could be converted to asynchronous technology-enabled delivery is a real-world problem encountered by many instructional designers.

Risk-based instructional design analytics are an effective, efficient, and evidence-based approach for identifying misaligned learning outcomes and content gaps; appropriate teaching-learning activities; justifiable delivery and interaction methods; and targets to concentrate time, effort, and resources for meeting learning objectives and redesign parameters.

This 'how to' presentation will outline a solution for restructuring an existing multi-course higher education program using a risk-based mapping process for curriculum analysis and redesign decision-making. How a current state curriculum was coded, analyzed, and reorganized using triangulation of three sequential techniques is presented: 1) mapping of program (PLO) and course learning outcome (CLO) mastery requirements based on Bloom's taxonomy (introduce, reinforce, mastery); 2) coding PLO failure risk based on the potential impact of not learning the content to the required mastery level (low, medium, high); and 3) sorting of CLOs based on keywords, into topics (course lessons) and then into themes (courses).

This session demonstrates how instructional design analytics were used successfully in real-world practice to codify and sort existing curricula for program redesign.

Session 11.1b

Location: CLE B017

11:50 - 12:10 | Open Access and the Habitual Use of Crown Photography of Indigenous Children: Ethical Implications

Research

Ivy Shawl-Song | *Independent*

Abstract

The go-to images representing the history of Canada's Indian Residential Schools (IRS) are of identifiable Indigenous children. As technological advances afford open access to the now digitized photographs, consideration for the child's right to agency over self is often ignored. Using a social semiotic framework, historical images present alongside paradigmatic relationships to demonstrate the gaps apparent between ethics, Copyright Canada law, child advocacy and social norms. Hundreds of unpublished analogue photographs have passed into provincial and federal archival holdings where copyright remains in perpetuity with the Crown. In cases of academic research and curriculum content design, ethics approval or community engagement are currently not needed when utilizing these images. Many of these children could still be alive today and hold no agency over the photographs. While copyright law serves to protect the creators and users of a photograph, there are no ethical guidelines for the use, dissemination or protection of images of children. This presentation concludes with the demonstration of an interactive reflexive tool developed from the author's master's thesis. This tool facilitates ethical consideration beyond the systemic use of 'Fair Dealing for Educational Purposes' and may serve to highlight efforts around the privacy and protection of children in research and education.

12:30 - 1:45 | Lunch

1:45 - 2:05 | Publication Pathways | Michele Jacobsen (UCalgary) & Valerie Irvine (UVic)

Session available online in Zoom & CLE B017

2:05 - 2:15 | Break

2:15 - 3:15 | Session 12

All sessions also available online in Zoom

Session 12.1a

Location: CLE B017

2:15 - 2:35 | Developing the Technology-integrated Assessment Scale

Research

Colin Madland | *University of Victoria*, **Valerie Irvine** | *University of Victoria*, **Chris DeLuca** | *Queen's University* & **Okan Bulut** | *University of Alberta*

i Abstract

This presentation will highlight the process of building and testing a new scale intended to help researchers understand the Technology-integrated Assessment Framework (TIAF) and how it functions in higher education. In 2024, we published a description of the development of the TIAF (Madland et al., 2024), highlighting four factors related to technology-integrated assessment: (1) assessment purposes, (2) the duty of care owed by instructors to learners, (3) factors influencing technology acceptance, and (4) assessment design. Our current work is focused on understanding how these four factors within the TIAF framework can be operationalized. We will share our process of designing the scale, including defining the key constructs, identifying parameters, and framing parameters as items on the scale. We will also share preliminary results from our pilot study using the first draft of the scale. This session will be of interest to undergraduate and graduate students as well as researchers, faculty members, and administrators seeking to refresh their skills in scale development and anyone interested in assessment in higher education.

Session 12.1b

Location: CLE B017

2:35 - 2:55 | From Mobile Learning to Artificial Intelligence: Evolving UTAUT Constructs in Educational Technology Adoption

Research

Caleb Or | *Singapore Institute of Technology*

Abstract

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) has played a crucial role in understanding technology adoption in education. This study examines the evolution of UTAUT constructs over three technological periods: the Early Adoption Period (2003–2010), the Mobile and Social Media Boom (2011–2016), and the AI and Digital Transformation Era (2017–Present). Using a one-stage meta-analytic structural equation modelling (OSMASEM) approach, data from 73 studies were analysed to evaluate relationships among key constructs, including Performance Expectancy (PE), Effort Expectancy (EE), Social Influence (SI), Facilitating Conditions (FC), Behavioural Intention (BI), and Use Behaviour (UB). The findings revealed substantial variability across contexts and constructs, with BI consistently emerging as the strongest predictor of UB, underscoring its centrality in technology adoption. The influence of PE on BI increased over time, reflecting advancements in technology that enhanced performance outcomes. The importance of FC in predicting UB also grew, emphasising the role of infrastructure and technical support in adoption. These insights highlight the dynamic nature of UTAUT constructs, providing actionable recommendations for educators, policymakers, and technology developers to align strategies with evolving user needs and expectations in educational contexts. This study reinforces UTAUT's relevance in addressing contemporary technological challenges.

Session 12.2a

Location: CLE B019

2:15 - 2:35 | From Silos to Shared Knowledge: Creating a Provincial Generative AI Community of Practice in Post-Secondary Education

Practice

Alexander Warrington, Mariel Miller, Christian Bock | *University of Victoria*

Abstract

As generative AI (GenAI) continues to impact teaching and learning in post-secondary education, it presents both significant opportunities and complex challenges for educators, academic support staff, institutional leaders, and students. This session explores the rationale, potential benefits, and structural considerations for establishing a provincial, or pan-Canadian, Community of Practice (CoP) focused on GenAI in higher education. In this session, we will begin by exploring the need for a CoP as a collaborative response to shared concerns, including ethical use, student skills and competencies, pedagogical adaptation, and beyond. Next, we will discuss examples of existing CoP models from various institutions, analyzing their structures, activities, and demonstrated impacts. Finally, the session will conclude with an interactive discussion on the value, critical foci, challenges, and sustainability of a cross-institutional CoP. Discussion questions will focus on the potential benefits of provincial or national coordination and the critical issues to consider moving forward. By fostering conversation and integrating perspectives, this session aims to take first steps toward initiating or enhancing collaboration within and across institutions.

Session 12.2b

Location: CLE B019

2:35 - 2:55 | The Impact of Sense of Belonging on Emotion Regulation in Online Collaborative Learning: A Cross-Case Comparison of Small Groups

Research

Yeeun Choi & Mariel Miller | *University of Victoria*

Abstract

This study explores how a sense of belonging impacts the regulation of emotion in the face of challenge during online collaboration. A cross-case analysis was conducted between two groups who experienced similar emotions during a negative experience but reported contrasting levels of sense of belonging. Data include video recordings of collaborative exams and post-exam reflections to gain in-depth qualitative insights into learners' perceptions and regulation strategies. By adopting self-regulated learning (SRL) framework, the study seeks to understand how students cope with negative experiences during collaboration, and to what extent their sense of belonging impacts their strategic management of challenges. Findings inform evidence-based guidelines for designing online collaborative learning experiences that not only support students' emotion regulation but

also create supportive online environments.

3:15 - 3:30 | Break

3:30 - 4:30 | Insight Spotlight

Location: CLE A127

Facilitated Synthesis of Insights from Across the Conference, Culminating in Forward-Looking Actions to Tackle our Biggest Challenges and Grand Challenges

Valerie Irvine & Mariel Miller | *University of Victoria*

4:30 - Late | Off Site Social Event

Location: TBD

Closing Celebration