Centre for Learning and Teaching

focus

on university teaching and learning

From the Director
Opportunities to integrate information and communication technologies in the learning experiences we create for our students, and for our broader communities, and for ourselves are exploding. In this issue of *Focus*, Dalhousie colleagues share their insights on how these technologies can enrich learning - and teaching - across the disciplines.

Lynn Taylor
Centre for Learning and Teaching

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
Inspiring Minds

A Brief Overview of Online Learning Partnerships at Dalhousie's ILO (Integrated Learning Online)

by Aaron Panych,
Online Instructional Designer,
Integrated Learning Online

The Integrated Learning Online (ILO) unit at Dalhousie has been in the business of facilitating online learning partnerships since its inception in 1996. The nature of these partnerships has evolved over the years with the adoption of different information and communication technologies (ICTs). This article offers a brief overview of how these ICTs have shaped and will continue to shape online learning partnerships at the university.

In 1996, Dalhousie began using a virtual learning environment (now known at Dalhousie as Blackboard OWL) to help faculty members run online course spaces and blend face-to-face courses with online delivery. As of 2011, approximately 85% of Dalhousie undergraduate courses are set up with corresponding online spaces for students to access "anytime, anywhere" course content and interact with content, instructors, and other students.

Despite the potential benefits of this system, there is still debate about whether basic OWL operation results in student-centred learning partnerships. Some online learning specialists argue that OWL in its current form follows a traditional lecture-based, instructor-centric model and is used primarily for administrative tasks (Downes, 2005; Wiley & Mott, 2000). Much of the current Blackboard OWL use at Dalhousie bears this out, as many faculty use the technology to post lecture notes and other course-related files; to administer assignments, exams, and grades; and to post announcements and send mail messages. In this way, the OWL is not exactly a learning partnership much different from a traditional lecture-based, face-to-face class.

However, other OWL courses commonly take advantage of

the asynchronous interactive component that online discussion boards offer and extend their class discussions online. In this capacity, the OWL offers the potential for basic interactive instructor-student and student-student learning partnerships.

OWL also enables similar partnerships outside of formal classes. There are currently over 200 online community course spaces in the system representing a vast array of subject matter from research projects to student groups to book clubs to inter-professional educational initiatives. For example, students in the health professions learn and interact with one another in the inter-professional health education OWL space through both the Health Mentors Program and new online inter-professional modules. [See Basiletti article on page 4.]

In 2002, the online learning landscape at Dalhousie changed. The ILO licensed a synchronous webinar platform (or virtual classroom environment) called Wimba Classroom. The technology allows for online, real-time meetings and presentations with small and large groups using a content board, audio, and video. The technology changed the available model for online delivery. Not only are live online meetings now possible, instructors can easily open up participation to guests outside Dalhousie. It is now common for programs and instructors to bring in remote students and lecturers using the technology.

It can also be used to participate

"There are currently hundreds of live, virtual classroom initiatives at the university, with many of them employing learning partnerships with individuals and institutions external to Dalhousie."

in remote events. As an example, Daniel Ruzzante of the Biology department recently used Wimba Classroom to deliver a set of live presentations to a graduate class in Brazil – all while he was sitting in the basement of the Killam library. The College of Continuing Education (CCE) uses instructors from across the country to deliver course lectures online through the virtual classroom. There are currently hundreds of live, virtual classroom initiatives at the university, with many of them employing learning partnerships with individuals and institutions external to Dalhousie.

In the last few years, new ICTs and the advent of social media have again changed the online

school of thought argues that this hyper-connected environment is significant enough to call for a new learning theory for the digital age - connectivism - and encourages new online instructional strategies that emphasize a student-centric, personal learning model (Siemens, 2005). With the web and social media, students now have virtually unlimited resources at their fingertips to aggregate and search for knowledge, create their own content using all types of media, and connect with other individuals for sense-making. [See Gruzd article on page 6, and Spasova article on page 10.]

Dalhousie's ILO now supports a social learning platform (Campus Pack) where instructors can integrate wikis, blogs, podcasts, and online journals into their classes. [See Bennett article on page 10.] Importantly, the platform also gives students (and instructors) the tools for their own online content creation, sense-making, and partnership-building, as well

Integrated Learning Online Front Desk, Killam Library, B-269

educational landscape. Online learning partnerships take on a new meaning based on the types of connections made online and how these connections are shaped into learning experiences. An emerging
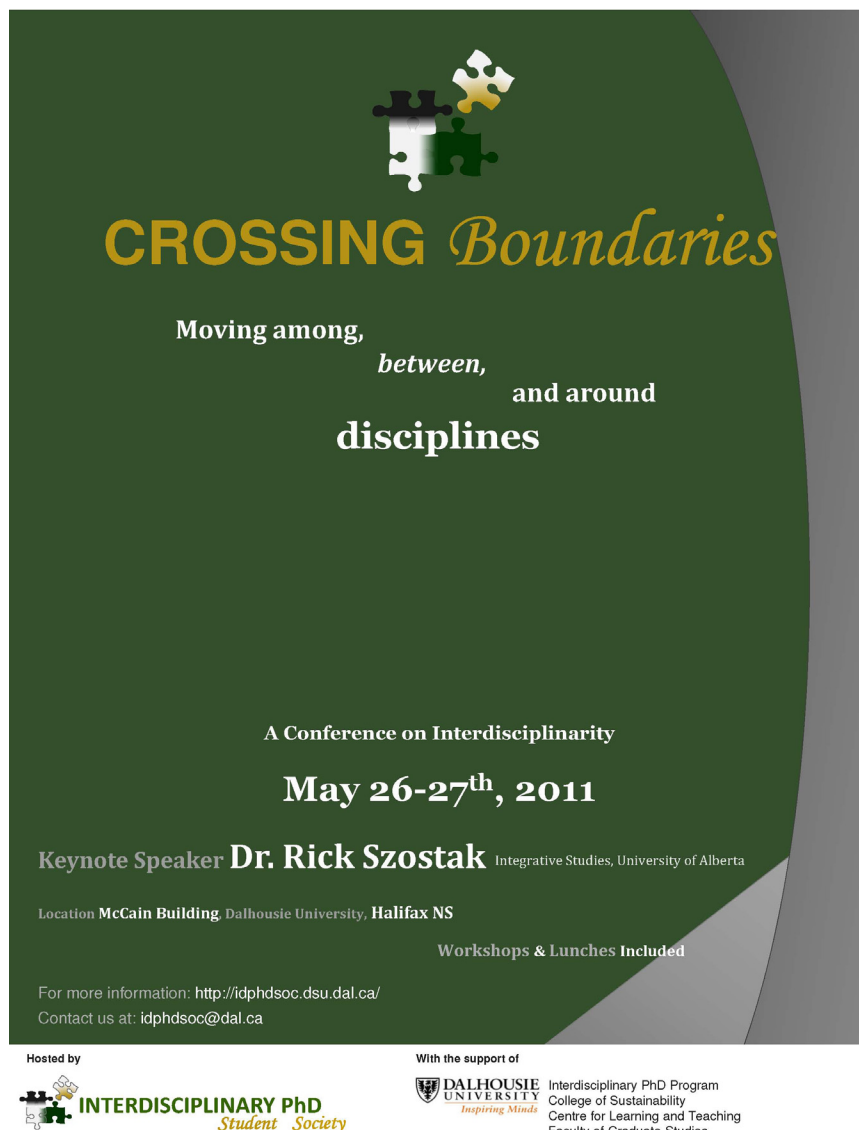
as the capacity to build an online portfolio for use across their academic studies and into their professional lives. Anyone with a Dalhousie NetID is now able to create their own personal learning

space using the tools. This platform opens up more opportunities for all users to enhance online learning partnerships as it lets them determine the level of access to their content. They can invite anyone they choose to join their personal learning space. Access can be restricted to a few trusted people or opened up to the larger web for public viewing and interaction. This new personal and networked learning environment is still finding its legs at Dalhousie but offers new and exciting challenges for implementation. Of course, new ICTs continue to shape the landscape. Mobile learning and the "semantic web" are currently poised to have a significant impact on educational settings. It is anybody's guess what kinds of new learning partnerships will emerge.

To learn more about the ILO and its educational technologies, visit http://ilo.dal.ca

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Goodbye, Zita Hildebrandt

In February, after 10 years as the Administrative Assistant for the Centre for Learning and Teaching, Zita Hildebrandt left Dalhousie to work at the NSGEU office. As well as welcoming visitors at CLT's front desk, and answering innumberable questions about our activities and programs, Zita has also been CLT's consummate event planner. Many of you will have attended the Fall New Faculty Orientation, Teaching Assistant Development Days or Dalhousie's Annual Conference on University Teaching and Learning. Even more of you will have participated in our workshop series over the years. From planning, through to registration and smooth running of events, all of us will miss Zita's confident assurance that every event will be a great success. Everyone at CLT wishes Zita every success in her new position!

Continuing Professional Development for Occupational Therapists Through Technology:
A comparison of two approaches in Atlantic Canada

by Mari Basiletti, M.Sc.(OT), O.T.Reg.(PEI), School of Occupational Therapy

The challenges to capacity-building for occupational therapists in Atlantic Canada have been explored by the Dalhousie University School of Occupational Therapy (Manojlovitch, 2006). Occupational therapists in Atlantic Canada recognize the need to develop skills, link current theories of occupation and practice, and to share knowledge and expertise with other therapists (Basiletti, Carswell, Head, Ju Lin, & Townsend, 2010). But the geographic separation and the rural nature of the Atlantic provinces create challenges to involvement in continuing professional development for the almost 900 occupational therapists who practice in the region (CIHI, 2009). Regional conferences and workshops are available, but with ongoing fiscal restraints within health care, it is difficult for many therapists to attend.

In order to address these challenges, a partnership between the School of Occupational Therapy and the occupational therapy community has been formed to create new opportunities for professional development and knowledge exchange through the use of available technology. Under the program entitled *Life-Long Learning Anywhere*, four projects have been sponsored by the School of Occupational Therapy in partnership with regional therapists: 1. The Lunch and Learn Teleconference Series; 2. Current Topics; 3. E-Learning Courses; 4. Communities of Practice.

I have had experience as the coordinator for two of the above projects: E-Learning Courses and the Lunch and Learn Teleconference Series. In the present article I will describe these two approaches to learning through technology, and will compare their processes, benefits and challenges in creating learning partnerships between occupational therapists in Atlantic Canada.

E-Learning Courses

The director of the School of Occupational Therapy first approached me to design and coordinate a short online course for regional occupational therapists in 2008. The purpose of the proposed course was to provide participants with a forum with which to link their occupational therapy practice with current theories of enabling occupation. I based the course material on OCCU5010, Advanced Studies in Enabling Occupation, from the School of Occupational Therapy post-professional Master of Science program. The short online course is offered through the Online Web Learning (OWL) platform on the Dalhousie University website. The course runs for four weeks and consists of readings from professional journals and texts, analysis of the course material, and on-line discussion. Each participant is assigned by the coordinator to lead the group in the discussion of the week's readings at least once during the course. All participants contribute to the discussion and exploration of the linkages between the current theory of enabling occupation and their practice areas.

> *"...a partnership between the School of Occupational Therapy and the OT community has been formed to create new opportunities for professional development and knowledge exchange through the use of available technology."*

The benefits of the on-line short course are many. First, the course provides a forum for active involvement in on-line learning for the participants. The course also gives each participant the opportunity to discuss their insights about the assigned scholarly readings, and to share their experience and knowledge with the other therapists. The convenience of being able to log on to the website "anytime, anywhere" appeals to working therapists, and the networking between participants that is established within the course can be continued after the course is completed. In addition, participants receive continuing

education credits from the School of Occupational Therapy.

There are also some drawbacks connected with the on-line course format. Registration for the course and establishment of participant access to the OWL website involves assistance from the School staff and may be time-consuming. Some registrants have difficulties in connecting to the website initially which can be frustrating. Participants have to commit to the four-week time frame, and there is a registration fee for the course. Registration numbers for the two courses that I have coordinated thus far have been low, but the participants have found it a valuable experience. As one therapist commented: "I am delighted to log onto continuing professional development right at my desk".

Lunch and Learn Teleconference Series

The Lunch and Learn Teleconference Series was developed in 2007 and coordinated by Brenda Head, M.Sc.OT(C) from 2007 – 2010. The series provides therapists with the opportunity " … to connect with others with similar interests, to exchange practice and theoretical knowledge, and to promote evidence-informed practice" (Head, 2009). The series is now in its fourth year and participation continues to be high. There have been between three to eight presentations within each of the fall and winter terms of the series. The presentations are broadcast by teleconference funded by the School of Occupational Therapy during the lunch hour. A variety of topics have been presented through the Lunch and Learn Series from a wide range of practice and professional areas. The last three series have also included special sessions

on student fieldwork practice. Prior to each term the coordinator contacts therapists in the region who are known by their peers to be innovative in their field or to have expertise in a particular practice area, and invites them to participate as presenters. Once the presenters have been confirmed, a schedule is created by the coordinator and is sent to contacts in the region who disseminate the information within their area. The power-point and/or handouts provided by the presenter are sent by email to the registrants prior to each session. During the teleconference the presenter typically speaks for about 45 minutes and discussion and questions occur during the latter part of the session.

Conducting professional presentations via teleconference during the lunch break is a convenient method for therapists to participate in continuing education and knowledge exchange. The necessary technology, i.e. a telephone, is readily available and there is no cost to participants. Networking possibilities are created and the series offers a wide range of topics from which to choose. In addition, the teleconference format provides regional therapists with the opportunity to experience the role of presenter in a less formalized venue than at a professional conference. As one participant commented: "The experience of being a Lunch and Learn presenter gave me the confidence to present at a local conference".

The Lunch and Learn sessions, though convenient, only allow for one hour for the presentation and ensuing discussion to take place. Participants are usually eating lunch during the session and often do not get actively involved in the discussion. The presenter is

isolated from participants and may not receive much feedback from them during the session. Depending on the quality of the telephone speaker system on either end, the presentation may be difficult to hear. These issues are relatively minor and the Lunch and Learn Series continues to have a registration of an average of 18-20 sites per session.

The use of technology is a valuable learning tool for occupational therapists in Atlantic Canada, as shown by the positive impact of the E-Learning Courses and Lunch and Learn Teleconference Series. Each method has benefits and challenges, with the potential to continue to evolve and grow into the future. The two projects have proven that the partnership between the Dalhousie University School of Occupational therapy and the community of occupational therapists can enable therapists to participate in skill development and knowledge exchange through everyday technology.

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Universities and Social Networking:
What's there for us?

by Anatoliy Gruzd, School of Information Management

Social Media Lab

Last August, a soon-to-be student of mine posted a message on Twitter, a popular micro-blogging platform, asking her online followers for information about @dalprof, from whom she was about to take a class. As it happens @dalprof is my username on Twitter, and because the student used it in her post, Twitter automatically alerted me to her message. Within minutes, somebody replied to her message offering some insights into my background. At first, I felt a bit strange knowing that people are having a conversation about me and making it available to over 200 million other Twitter users (if they were looking). But after getting over my initial feeling of unease, I began thinking about how fast social media is changing our social norms and the types of information that we can now access.

This anecdote from my academic life is an example of how students are quickly adapting and incorporating social media into their daily lives. According to a recent study done by the EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research, 9 of 10 students use social networking sites (SNS) daily (Smith & Caruso, 2010). It seems that instructors across North America are also quickly catching on to this fact, and are starting to incorporate SNS and social media into their lesson plans. Below are a few examples of how instructors in different universities are using SNS and social media in their classes.

Dr. Alec Couros, an Associate Professor at the University of Regina, has started incorporating wikis into courses such as Educational Technology and Media (Chant, 2010). On the course wiki, students are invited to contribute to reading lists, discussions regarding assignments, and so on. Since the wiki is open, both current and past students are able to engage in the dialogue and contribute ideas.

In another example, Dr. Brett Simmons (http://www. bretlsimmons. com), a Professor of Management at the University of Nevada, teaches courses on Organizational Management as well as Personal Branding to both undergraduate and MBA students. Instead of simply lecturing students on how to create a personal brand, Dr. Simmons has taken his class one step further and actually created an online personal brand for himself by uniting his profiles on Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube into his professional blog. In addition, Dr. Simmons regularly contributes articles and podcasts to a student run blog entitled *Student Branding Blog* (http://studentbranding.com) in order to provide tips and expertise in the area.

A final example comes from the University of Chicago Law School, where faculty and students created a microblogging platform called TweetChicago (http://webcast-law.uchicago.edu/tweetchicago), in which they contribute tweets regarding what they are doing and thinking about during the day. The purpose is to share projects, articles, or links of interest with the entire law school community, as well as provide prospective students with an idea of what daily life is like at their School.

SNS and social media are not just useful in teaching. In our own research at the Dalhousie Social Media Lab (http://SocialMediaLab. ca), we are starting to see that many research labs are using social media platforms to share ideas and communicate with their collaborators and the public at large. For instance, NextLab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which focuses on mobile innovation for global challenges, largely functions by sharing information through Twitter. NexLab also connects students and researchers through a program called the Android Development Group, in which members subscribe and post personal profiles containing contact information, resumes, location, and projects that they are working on.

Evidently, there are many potential benefits to using SNS in a University setting. For example,

> *"...students are quickly adapting and incorporating social media into their daily lives."*

by having access to SNS and social media tools, students can continue discussions started in one class and carry them over to another. Students also have a chance to view and build on conversations by others who took the same class in a previous semester. If used effectively, these new communication tools are a great way to create a sense of community among students and improve their ability to learn. Whether it is submitting questions via Twitter, blogging about current events related to general themes of the class, or using Facebook to carry out class discussions, you can expect an increase in students' class participation and engagement once SNS and social media are introduced into the mix.

Of course, SNS and social media are not without problems. Before introducing them into class settings, it is important to be aware of some of the pitfalls. First, be

> *"If used effectively, these new communication tools are a great way to create a sense of community among students and improve their ability to learn."*

aware that most students do not really want to mix their personal and academic lives. It is important to consider whether it is more beneficial for your class to set up their own social media solution such as MediaWiki versus relying on a public website such as Facebook. If you choose to rely on a public website, aside from the privacy concerns, there may also be some logistical concerns regarding accessibility and preservation of student-generated content. Specifically, will the website be accessible throughout the whole term? And is there a way to preserve your students' contributions even after the course is over? Both are very important questions, especially when we are talking about graded assignments. To address these problems, there are a few good social archiving tools such as Socialware Sync and CloudPreservation that can automatically archive the data coming from a multitude of social media and networking platforms and accounts.

Another concern with social media is that the content may be modified by somebody else on the website other than your students. If such concern exists, for product-oriented assignments, i.e., essays or papers, a possible solution may be to ask students to also submit one original copy of their assignment to

the course website. And if the assignment is more process-oriented, where students are assigned to become familiar with a particular tool and interact with their peers online, then there is always the option to simply ask students to write an essay about their experience with the tool and submit it in a more traditional way.

It is becoming more self-evident everyday that social networking is here to stay, and it is up to us to decide how to embrace these technologies for the benefits of our students. I think that the potential benefits of SNS and social media in general far outweigh the concerns described above, especially if we are prepared for them.

Happy Social Networking,
@dalprof

If you decide to incorporate SNS into your classes, I recommend reading a blog post from *Online Universities* called "100 Inspiring Ways to Use Social Media In the Classroom": http://bit.ly/hay2K6 and one from *University Affairs* entitled "A Beginner's Guide to Social Media": http://bit.ly/fkr6Sw

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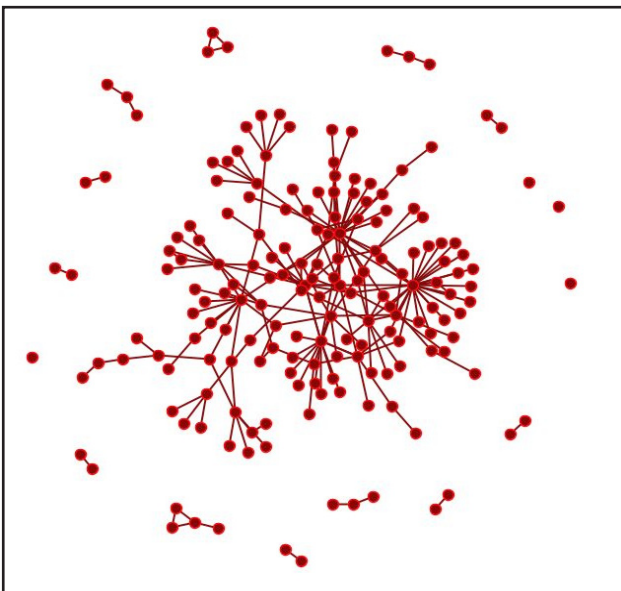
Network Visualization

# Real-life Tasks in a Virtual World

by Shannon Spasova
Russian Studies
Dalhousie University

Web 2.0 technologies have begun to provide educators with new ways of helping students connect real-life tasks with classroom learning. Virtual worlds represent one of the new opportunities for innovation. I will discuss my experiences of using a virtual world called *Second Life* (secondlife.com) in the Russian-language classroom, including the creation of a simulated Russian village for students, and its potential for enhancing student learning.

Second Life (hereafter referred to as SL) is a virtual world in which users interact with the world and each other using visual representations of themselves called avatars. Avatars can interact with the world in a variety of ways, including traveling through it, visiting places in it, communicating with other avatars using chat and voice chat, joining groups, attending events, buying virtual land, creating objects and scripts within the world, and even participating in virtual commerce. SL differs from other online "games" in that it has no inherent goal, and simply exists

as a platform and environment for whatever purposes its users create for it.

Perhaps for this reason, educators have been interested in exploring how to use SL for educational purposes. The approaches have been varied: many universities have created virtual campuses, but others have used it in different ways. A few examples include Canadian border guards being trained using a virtual border crossing[1], the US Department of Energy's area in which avatars can look inside a virtual particle accelerator,and visitors to an area[2] on mental health can experience a simulation that mimics the symptoms of mental disorders.[3] Even areas without explicit educational intent can be used for learning purposes: Moscow Island,
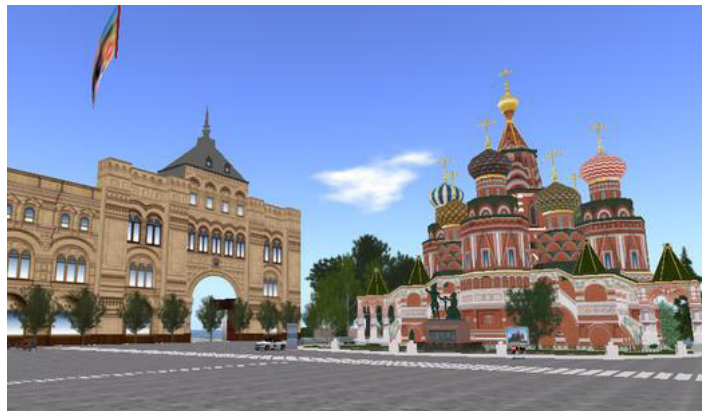
Screen capture of Red Square, Moscow
http://secondlife.com/destination/moscow-island

for example, reproduces Red Square, easily visited by Russian language students.[4] Avatars can gather in one space for events such as lectures, conferences, or musical performances, and can interact with others from anywhere in the world. As a teacher of Russian language and project assistant in foreign language technology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I was at first primarily interested in SL as a forum in which students

might be able to interact with native speakers of Russian. I discovered an area in the world called the "Russian Welcome Area," and found there a place in which people were "speaking" in Russian using text chat (now voice chat is also available). A colleague at UW-Madison, Molly Thomasy Blasing, also started to be interested in the possibility of using SL as a way to interact with native speakers. She and I saw great potential not only in SL as a venue for meeting and talking to Russian people, but in the cultural content that we experienced there. For example, when we were in the Russian Welcome Area on International Women's Day (an important holiday in Russia), we were presented with a virtual flower by another avatar we met – evidence of the target culture within SL. Molly decided to try taking students into SL, and I assisted her in organizing an experiment that would take a small group into the Russian Welcome Area.

We encountered a variety of problems during our experiment. Technical challenges included access to SL (a computer should have its software loaded as well as high-speed internet access and relatively powerful video and processing capabilities), and problems because of students' unfamiliarity with typing in Russian characters. Cultural problems manifested themselves as well. A few of the native speaker interlocutors expressed displeasure at our group crashing their Friday night dance party by using slang and vulgar language, much of which the students did not understand. Interestingly, however, several other native speakers
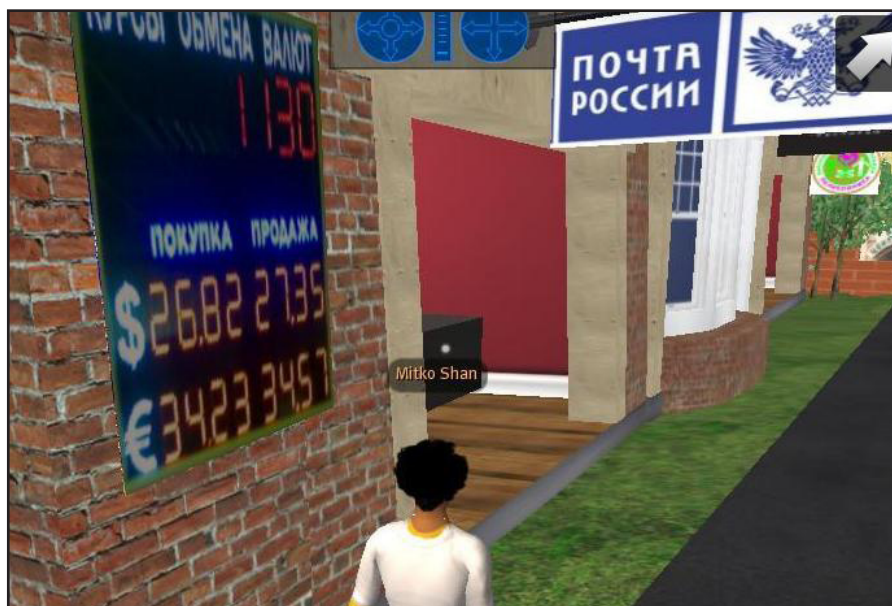
Screen capture of Shannon Spasova's virtual space, "Zhanningrad"

defended the students, chiding the offenders for mistreating "guests". Overall, though, student participants held the opinion that SL could provide them with a new way of interacting with native speakers of Russian.

The difficulties that we encountered during that experiment did not deter us from using SL with students, but it certainly affected the plans that we made for how we might use the tool with students in the future. Molly continued to use SL with students whose language proficiency was intermediate level or higher. She focused on questions of avatar identity, evidence of the target culture in SL, and evidence of language acquisition in the virtual setting (a full description of her conclusions from the two experiments can be found in the Spring 2010 issue of the *Slavic and East European Journal*).[5]

At Dalhousie University, however, most students in Russian language classes have a language proficiency of intermediate or below. So instead of using SL to introduce students to native speakers immediately, I decided to create a virtual space. My intentions

were threefold: firstly, to give the students a "safe" space in which to get oriented to SL and its environment; secondly, to create an environment simulating the target culture; and thirdly, to try to take advantage of what SL has that a real life classroom does not – namely, its visual, "embodied" nature. Encouraging students to use SL as a vehicle for interactions with native speakers became a long-term peripheral goal.

With a small Teaching and Learning with Technology grant from Dalhousie's Centre for Learning and Teaching, I created a virtual Russian town.[6] I had in mind tasks typically found in first- and second-year language textbooks – following and giving directions to locations in a city. Traditional pen-and-paper map exercises cannot mimic the way it feels to be in the physical space of the city, where you cannot see around corners or skip back to your starting point if you take a wrong turn. The "embodied" nature of SL, though, can do this, and the tasks potentially take on added "real-world" significance: if you don't understand the directions to the post office, then you do not get there – similar to a real-

world task but without the real-world stress of getting lost, for example. Unfortunately, some of the technical difficulties of using SL (some examples include the learning curve of avatar movement and the need for a computer with the SL software installed) have limited the ways in which I have been able to use it with students. I have, however, used a video of an avatar in the world and asked students to describe the avatar's movements.

In the context of considering the possibility of teaching the Russian language in an online environment, I continue to think about how virtual worlds might serve language teachers and students as the technology advances. If language courses are offered online, SL could provide a common meeting space for instructors and students, since classes, office hours, lectures, and cultural events can be held virtually. Furthermore, the greater community of SL has the potential to offer new ways to extend learning beyond the classroom (whether the real-world or the virtual classroom) through interactions with other avatars, simulations of real-life experiences, or completely new and innovative activities impossible in the real world.

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Compendium2: Partnerships in Writing, Teaching and Learning

by Lyn Bennett
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Partnerships in learning can happen in many ways and at different levels, from the individual class to the discipline and beyond. Dalhousie's *Compendium2* project offers a vivid example of how fruitful partnerships can facilitate teaching and learning for both faculty and students.

A multidisciplinary, collaborative, and open-source publication, *Compendium2* is an online journal published through Dalhousie's Electronic Text Centre (ETC). Subtitled *Writing, Teaching, and Learning in the University*, the journal considers submissions from university instructors at all levels and from all disciplines. The three annual issues so far published include contributions from diverse regions, from New Brunswick to Arizona, and from different kinds of universities, including general, liberal arts, polytechnic, and even aeronautical. In its geographical and institutional breadth, the journal makes visible the partnership of research and teaching inherent in all disciplines and at all institutions, and also makes explicit the necessary partnership of theory and practice. The journal publishes conventional article-length works, from an explication of narrative's role in student engagement to an exposition of the overall importance of teaching writing. Compendium also publishes shorter, more "hands-on" pieces that explain, for instance, how one might use the TV shows CSI or House in teaching first-year writing.

Though *Compendium2* represents the field of rhetoric and composition (long established in the US, but a relatively new specialty in Canada) as well as writing studies (an overlapping area focused primarily on composition), its content and its appeal are broadly interdisciplinary. Given that all university teachers are at least implicitly engaged in the teaching of writing, if only by way of communicating in a particular disciplinary discourse, *Compendium2* publishes work by scholars and teachers who may not specialize in either field. The journal, in other words, encourages university teachers interested in effective communication to make explicit what they've learned through pedagogical practice.

Articulating in a paper what might otherwise remain only implicit in their classroom teaching, such teachers inevitably forge connections with other instructors based on common experience, creating partnerships that may be too often overlooked by those who tend not to share what they do in the classroom, or perhaps even devote much attention to examining the reasons why they do it. Urging even non-specialists to think critically about composition pedagogy and to articulate the results, the journal's mandate of inclusion benefits authors as much as readers and, by so doing, encourages the kind of reciprocity that is the hallmark of true partnership.

Produced through the cooperation of various departments and units in the university as well as students at varying levels of study, *Compendium2* represents partnerships in more than its substance. The journal was inspired by the format of *Learning through Writing: A Compendium of Assignments and Techniques*, a collection of faculty-authored pieces on teaching writing first published by Dalhousie's Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT) in 1993. The *Compendium2* project was initiated by me with the support of Dr. Dean Irvine, my departmental colleague, as well as Margie Clow Bohan, Manager of the Dalhousie Writing Centre, and start-up costs were covered by the Teaching and Learning with Technology Grant for which we jointly applied. Given the CLT's interest in teaching and learning partnerships, the award supports projects focused on teaching in general 1and on collaborative teaching in particular. Because

> *"The journal encourages university teachers interested in effective communication to make explicit what they've learned through pedagogical practice."*

the journal is open source and published through Dalhousie's ETC, and actual publication costs are therefore low, the grant was used to hire graduate and undergraduate students to help get the journal up and running. Acquisition and substantive editing were largely undertaken by the students in my third-year experiential-learning class in conjunction with the Writing Centre, while the journal's publication was undertaken by Dr. Irvine's Editing and Publishing class, a fourth-year English seminar whose participants carefully prepared the first issue for electronic dissemination.

With contributions solicited, selected, and substantively edited by members from the English Department, the CLT, and the Writing Centre, we are now putting together the journal's fourth issue with the help of this year's Writing Practice (ENGL3113) students. As its title implies, this upper-level English class puts student learning into practical application, and it does so through two kinds of partnerships: the first involves working closely with first-year students to improve their writing, and the second entails working with the journal's contributors in preparing *Compendium2* for publication. Through the close work of copy and layout editing, the students learn a great deal and, in the process, also discover how much they already know. Because of their attention to detail as well as their fresh perspectives, the students find themselves able to help more experienced writers in ways they would not have

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previously imagined. They are, in fact, often pleasantly surprised at just how much they have to contribute in their partnerships with authors, with other students, and with their professor.

The many partnerships vital to initiating, launching, and sustaining *Compendium2* have everything to do with its success. That the journal is a success is attested to by an increasing number of submissions as well as consistently positive feedback. *Compendium2*'s contributors often go out of their way to note how impressed they are with the caliber of the copy and layout editing and the quality of the overall product. Given that

these are academic writers who have no doubt published in other venues, their responses validate not only the diligent and conscientious work of the students, but also the value of learning partnerships more generally. Working collaboratively makes all the difference for the students, and the partnerships in which they engage have much to teach us about the possibilities of our own. Though the students sometimes agree to disagree, as do all academics, it is their multiple points of view, their extended discussions, and their negotiation of even the finest textual details that bring about a better result. In its many and multi-faceted partnerships, the example of *Compendium2* reminds us of what we know but too often ignore – that the best writing and thinking isn't done alone.

For more information about the journal, visit www.compendium2.ca

2010-2011 Dalhousie Teaching and Learning with Technology Grant Recipients

The aim of the Teaching and Learning with Technology (TLT) grants is to provide the resources for Dalhousie faculty to use established and emerging technologies to create high quality learning experiences for students.
For more information on TLT grants, see: http://learningandteaching.dal.ca/grant.html

Dan E. Kelley, Dept. of Oceanography, Faculty of Science
"*Gravity current demonstration, with advanced visualization and analysis techniques*" - $1962

Simon Gadbois, John Christie, Jonathan Fawcett, Dept. of Psychology, Faculty of Science
"*Plagiarism Detection as a Learning Instrument*" - $2000

Shannon Spasova, Dept. of Russian Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
"*Online Russian Language Courses*" - $2000

Emanuel Jannasch, School of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture and Planning
"*Video Game Engines in Architectural Learning*" - $5000

Wendy Stewart, Peggy Alexiadis Brown, Division of Medical Education, Faculty of Medicine
"*Exploring the Learning Environment of First and Second Year Medical Students in a Distributed and Renewed Medical Education Program*" - $4930

Carolyn Campbell, School of Social Work, Faculty of Health Professions
"*Fostering Critical Reflection for Transformational Learning: An Analysis of 2 years of the online Critical Reflective Dialogue Group (CRDG) & an 'Advancing Social Justice' course*" - $2000

Kim Brooks, Anne Matthewman, Mark Lewis, Schulich School of Law
"*Effective Legal Writing: Supporting the Foundations*" - $5000

Joanna Zed, Stephanie Connidis - Dept. of Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine
" *Dalhousie Family Medicine Residency Training Program: Curriculum Re-Design & Development for the Community Health Unit*" - $5000

Upcoming CLT Event

Recording Teaching Accomplishment:
Two-Part Workshop Series on the Teaching Portfolio

The teaching dossier (or portfolio) is widely used by university academic staff to document their teaching skills and responsibilities and to provide evidence of the quality of their teaching practice. In many faculties and departments at Dalhousie, candidates for appointment, re-appointment, tenure, or promotion are required to submit a teaching dossier as part of their application. Beyond this purpose, the act of compiling a dossier requires university teachers to closely examine their teaching practice—an exercise that can help to identify strengths and weaknesses and to guide plans for teaching enhancement and innovation.

Part 1: May 17 • Part 2: May 19
9:00am to 12:00pm, Room B400, Killam Library (basement)

For more information, contact us at 494-1622 or email CLT@Dal.Ca or visit our website at http://learningandteaching.dal.ca/

clt

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