

# COURSE SYLLABUS - Spring 2006

EME 6936 Distance Learning &  
EME 7458 Research in Distance Learning

University of South Florida  
College of Education  
Instructional Technology

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**This Syllabus** is the official document of the course; however it is subject to change if the instructors deem it necessary. Please read it carefully and ask questions if you have them. The syllabus contains a matrix of the readings, assignments, and discussions for which you will be responsible. The syllabus also explains the participation, evaluation and grading systems which will be used in this course. This includes assessment of discussions, written assignments, group projects and papers.

***At the bottom of the syllabus you will find a very important piece that you should read carefully and act on. This is an agreement between you and the instructors.*** We expect to get an e-mail from each student who will be participating in the class that shows you have read and understand this syllabus.

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## INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

<b>Dr. Shauna Schullo</b>	Email	<a href="mailto:shauna@usf.edu">shauna@usf.edu</a>
	Office Phone	813-974-6359
	Office Hours	Flexible, by appointment
	Virtual Office Link	See Blackboard
<b>Melissa Venable</b>	Email	<a href="mailto:mvenable@admin.usf.edu">mvenable@admin.usf.edu</a>
	Office Phone	813-974-4645
	Office Hours	Flexible, by appointment
	Virtual Office Link	See Blackboard

Expect a response from email requests within 48 hours during the week.

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## ABOUT THE COURSE

### **Course Description:**

This is a survey course examining the field of distance learning. This is NOT a production course on developing web sites. Although you will leave with enough knowledge to begin designing a Distance Learning course, the nature of a survey course is for you to get the big picture of Distance Learning in many different environments and using many different media or combinations of media. With this said, you will produce products in this class that will help to assess your understanding of the field of Distance

Learning. These will usually be in the form of written work, but may also include things such as presentations and actual distance course elements.

This course is designed to provide an integrated framework to explore theory within practice. The course will explore all types of distance and distributed learning, not just *online* learning.

Topics include:

- Distance technologies
- Implications for teaching and learning
- Issues and trends in distance learning
- Research in distance learning

### **Course Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this semester, students who have participated fully in this course should be able to:

1. Describe examples of various **distance learning delivery systems** and explore their implications for teaching and learning.
2. Use professional journals and established distance learning references as resources to identify **historical and contemporary trends** in the field and to suggest areas of emerging interest for teachers, students, and administrators.
3. Compare and contrast the nature of **interactivity in traditional and virtual classrooms**, including both synchronous and asynchronous environments.
4. Review representative **literature in distance and distributed learning** and propose a research agenda (EME 7458 students only), to challenge conclusions reported, suggest replication, or modify an existing line of inquiry.

### **Course Materials:**

**No textbook** is required for this course. We will be using a **variety of readings** from multiple sources, which will be available online or via USF's [Virtual Library Electronic Reserve](http://www.lib.usf.edu/virtual/ereserve/index.html) (<http://www.lib.usf.edu/virtual/ereserve/index.html>). You can either print the material or read it from the screen, whichever you would prefer. Please do not print everything unless you feel it is necessary for your learning. Print only what you need to read off line. This should save you a significant amount of money.

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## **PARTICIPATION, EVALUATION AND GRADING**

### **Participation:**

**Active participation** is a critical component of building an effective online learning community. You are expected to be a regular and active participant in online discussions. This means you will post original material and thoughts as well as reply to posts submitted by others. Reading assignments will be made from a variety of online resources to prepare you to engage in the discussion. The quality of online asynchronous discussion will be driven by the extent of your preparation.

The purpose of the discussions is to promote a learning community and encourage **critical thinking** skills in order to assimilate the information that is being provided. Participation in the discussion forums will be graded using a rubric to be sure that grading is fair. To understand how the grades will be determined, you can review the **discussion rubric** posted in the **Start Here!** area and at the top of each discussion assignment. The discussion questions have been specifically designed to encourage critical thinking and group discussion, so hopefully you will be encouraged to play an integral role in this process.

Everyone will be required to **read** the material, **participate** in the discussion and **turn in written assignments** on time. The breakdown of the points and due dates for each portion of the assignment can be seen in the assignment check list in Blackboard under **Start Here!** and also in the **Course Work** area of Blackboard.

During certain weeks discussion may weigh heavier than the written work and vice versa. Be sure you participate in discussions as instructed each week as they weigh heavily in your grade. To assist in the flexibility desired by distance learners in this course, you will be allowed to drop or miss 2 discussion postings and still receive full credit (a total of 8 points will be dropped).

**When are things due?**

**Original postings** in discussions **are due by Sunday** night at the bewitching hour of **Midnight** unless otherwise stated. This means that they are due by 12:00 as recorded by the discussion area which place a time stamp on submissions. Discussion **responses** and all remaining **written work are due on Wednesday night at Midnight** as recorded by the university server time stamp unless otherwise stated. Please keep this in mind when you are rushing to submit your assignments before the clock strikes 12:00. Synchronize the clock you watch with the one in the system or your assignments may be late!

**Evaluation and Rubrics:**

A rubric is used to grade the discussion assignments and to grade final projects. Check the **Start Here!** area of Blackboard to see these rubrics before you start your work as they will guide you to success. Other assignments are evaluated on their content, your writing, and the extent to which they meet the assignment requirements. If a checklist or rubric is provided in the assignment, please pay attention to what it says as we will follow these guidelines when grading the assignment.

**Grading:**

**Grading Scale for EME6936**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percent Scale</b>	<b>Point Scale 6936</b>
A	93-100%	126-135
B	84-92%	113-124
C	75-83%	101-112
D	65-74%	88-101

**Grading Scale for EDF7458**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percent Scale</b>	<b>Point Scale 7458</b>
A	93-100%	153-165
B	84-92%	139-152
C	75-83%	124-137
D	65-74%	107-123

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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to consult me as soon as possible. If accommodations are needed, a letter from the Office of Student Disability Services (SVC1133) will be required. Please inform

me if there is a need for alternate format for documents or a notetaker. You may also reach the office by phone, (813) 253-7031, TDD (813) 253-7053, or (813) 253-7336.

### **Academic Integrity:**

The University of South Florida has an account with an automated plagiarism detection service which allows instructors and students to submit student assignments to be checked for plagiarism. I reserve the right to 1) request that assignments be submitted to me as electronic files and 2) electronically submit assignments to SafeAssignment, or 3) ask students to submit their assignments to SafeAssignment through myUSF. Assignments are compared automatically with a database of journal articles, web articles, and previously submitted papers. The instructor receives a report showing exactly how a student's paper was plagiarized. ***If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, now is a VERY good time to learn.*** Please review the tutorial at <http://www.c21te.usf.edu> (Click on plagiarism). You are responsible for academic integrity. For information about plagiarism in USF's Undergraduate Catalog, go to <http://www.ugs.usf.edu/catalogs/0304/adadap.htm#plagiarism> .

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## **MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Project:**

A final project will make up either 29% or 35% of your grade (depending on the level at which you are taking the course) in this course. This project replaces final and midterm exams and is used to evaluate your understanding and application of distance education at the end of this course. The final project is designed to provide you the opportunity to analyze many of the primary issues in developing a distance education course, lesson or program. The project is to be completed in collaborative groups in the same way you would work in a team environment in real life.

The goal of this project is for you to design and plan a distance learning solution, not to actually create it. The result is a professional design document or proposal that responds to a real world scenario. Your group will be given the opportunity to choose from a group of scenarios or create your own in the first few weeks of the course. Your project should provide a solution to the scenario by describing a specific approach to distance education in the chosen environment. Think of it as a proposal to an important group of people who will make the decision if the project will get funding.

We will be grading your projects on the depth of analysis of the scenario and the resulting solution. We will look to see that that the knowledge you should have gained in this course is reflected. **This is not a life's work**, so keep it concise. The document should be somewhere in the area of 10-20 pages double-spaced. Your group will also be required to present, in some fashion, the content and context of your project to the rest of the class in an asynchronous or synchronous manner in which you facilitate a discussion about your ideas. More information will be provided on the project in Blackboard by Week 3 of the course.

***NOTE: This is a group assignment. All members of the group are graded on the quality of the project and their participation in the group. If you decide not to work in a group, you will be responsible for the same content and quality of solution as an entire group. There will be no adjustments to the assignment because you want to work alone. Please keep this in mind as we ask you to choose groups.***

### **Paper - (EDF7458 Only):**

As upper level graduate students in Instructional Technology it is very important that you are able to synthesize the research in your area and write professionally. For this reason, you will write a formal research paper to be submitted to a pre-specified professional journal of your choosing. A list of suggested journals will be provided by week 3 of the course.

You will follow the submission guidelines and requirements of the chosen journal and will be graded on the content, the quality of the writing and how well you meet the journal requirements. By the end of module 4, you will be required to send the instructor the journal name, the journal submissions guidelines and a letter of intent of submission describing what your paper will be about.

You will select the topic or research strand for your paper, drawing upon your familiarity with distance and distributed learning literature. Papers will be expected to follow journal guidelines for style and be of publishable quality, representative of professional work.

The paper will be worth approximately 20% of your final grade and a final version will be due during the last week of class. The instructors will serve as reviewers for the paper and will provide feedback and revision suggestions throughout the semester. It is hoped that the final version will be of high enough quality for you to actually submit the paper for publication consideration.

## WEEKLY ASSIGNMENT MATRIX

(Please see the Assignment Check List under **Start Here!** for due dates & points possible. Check the Course Work Area of Blackboard for more details!)

Part 1 (Weeks 1-6): An Introduction to Distance Education	
Module 1 - Course & Participant Introductions - Overview and History of Distance Learning	
<b>Presentation</b>	View the Module 1 presentation under Course Work in Blackboard. - Welcome & Introduction to the course
<b>Reading Assignments</b>	<p><b>Read the Syllabus and Course Guide First!</b></p> <p><b>Read the following articles:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• McIsaac, M.S. &amp; Gunawardena, C.N. (2004). Distance Education. In D.H. Jonassen, ed. Handbook of research for educational communications and technology, Second Edition: a project of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology. 355-396. New York: Simon &amp; Schuster Macmillan. Retrieved August 24, 2005, from <a href="http://www.aect.org/edtech/14.pdf">http://www.aect.org/edtech/14.pdf</a> with membership to AECT) (42 pages - PDF version available in Blackboard)</li> <li>• Schlosser, L. A., &amp; Simonson, M. (?) Distance Education: Definition and Glossary of Terms Chapter 1, August 24, 2005, from <a href="http://www.aect.org">http://www.aect.org</a> with membership to AECT) (7 pages - PDF version available in Blackboard the first week of class).</li> <li>• Loraine Sherry. Issues in Distance Learning. International Journal of Educational Telecommunications, 1(4), 337-365. Retrieved August 24, 2005, from <a href="http://carbon.cudenver.edu/~lsherry/pubs/issues.html">http://carbon.cudenver.edu/~lsherry/pubs/issues.html</a>. (24 pages) <b>This article is a bit dated, but it still has some really good information.</b></li> <li>• Review the presentation on the following web site on the history of Distance Education. Journey through the History of Distance Education (<a href="http://www.people.memphis.edu/~ffowler/title.html">http://www.people.memphis.edu/~ffowler/title.html</a>)</li> </ul> <p><b>Review the Following Web Site Resources - (hint: these are good resources for later)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willis, B. (1995). Distance Education Research Guide. Distance Learning Clearinghouse Overview University of Idaho, College of Engineering excerpted from Distance Education: A Practical Guide. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology Publications. Retrieved August 24, 2005, from <a href="http://www.uidaho.edu/eo/distglan.html">http://www.uidaho.edu/eo/distglan.html</a></li> </ul>













