

Learning Enhancement Grant	
2008-2009 Learning Enhancement Grant Application	
1. Project Title	Enhancing Students' Experiential Learning on Academic Libraries Using Wimba Classroom and Second Life
2. Project coordinator	Yunfei Du. Dr. Du has been teaching the course at UNT since 2007 and is currently the only faculty member who teaches it on a regular basis. He used to be a student assistant to help with designing 9 online courses for SLIS (currently Department of Library and Information Science).
3. Project abstract	This project will redesign a current discussion-based online course, Academic Libraries, using interactive presentation tools: Wimba Classroom and Second Life application. The PI will add more interactive course modules, student-centered discussions, critical thinking exercises, and use 3D avatars from Second Life to enhance the learning experience of this research seminar course.
4. Description of the project	<p><i>Introduction.</i> The course under consideration is SLIS 5330, Academic Libraries, which is taught every semester. The enrollment is from 45 to 55 per semester. Currently the course is taught as a seminar course, emphasizing readings and discussion of current trends and practices on college and research libraries. It is well-documented that discussion-based course delivery methods cannot satisfy every student with different learning styles, who may feel isolated because they cannot observe instructors, listen to a lecture live, and touch onsite demo objects.</p> <p><i>Needs and market.</i> In recent years educators began using 3D applications such as Second Life in distance education. An essential ingredient to the success of some of these applications is the ability to build the sense of community, In these virtual reality environments, the sense of community may be enhanced since it is taken place in game-playing environments, where visual, auditory, and kinesthetic experiences are engaged.</p> <p>Some institutions have also pioneered new course delivery models complement to WebCT/Blackboard. For example, some courses at School of Library and Information Science at San Jose State University are taught entirely online at Second Life, a project funded by a grant from Soros Foundation. The University of Illinois is offering short course on Second Life and gained much attention form LIS educators. Discussion in JESSE, the Library and Information Science Educators' listserv, generated more than 50 messages in October, 2008, notably commenting on newly NSF funded projects using Second Life as a teaching platform.</p> <p>While it is too early to predict if Second Life will be a main player of course delivery, it is necessary to experiment with this learning tool and examine its full potential for future courseware design and reuse.</p> <p><i>Goals:</i> The main goals are to enhance students' learning effectiveness in a virtual environment and promote the sense of community through carbon neutral activities, particularly through Wimba classroom and Second Life virtual meetings. Specific aims include 1) Using Camtasia software and standard Web editor to create online student tutorials on how to use Wimba classroom and make presentations over Second Life client software. 2) Developing online modules on how to create accounts, creating avatars,</p>

	<p>building lecture halls, and presenting at Second Life virtual environments. 3) Comparing learning effectiveness of Wimba, Second Life, and traditional discussion boards.</p> <p><i>Impact:</i> This project will contribute to cases of instructional design in terms of building students' sense of community, which is essential to today's distributed learning environments. Once this course is successfully revised, it will provide with pilot data on how to enhance teacher-student interactions. The revision emphasizes new communication technology that students can be represented visually as 3D avatars and how to interact at virtual classrooms. This 3D environment is likely to generate more retention in distance learning.</p> <p>The results from this project will be used as a preliminary data to apply for more grants from external funding agencies, such as National Science Foundation and federal Institute of Museum and Library Services.</p> <p><i>Budget.</i> The PI will spend his summer time developing the courseware. A part-time student assistant will be hired.</p> <p><i>Deliverables:</i> The deliverables from this project include but are not limited to: video clips demonstrating of Wimba and Second Life presentations; student assignments and project using Wimba and Second Life; tutorials to create 3D avatar; instructional manual to interact with other avatars. The PI already has all hardware and software needed to create said deliverables. In addition, assessment data will be collected from this project and will be incorporated to future publications.</p>	
<p>5. If project is to develop online course, list coordinator's experience with teaching online; Training courses completed;</p>	<p>Dr. Yunfei Du' dissertation is on student cognitive styles and Web-based distance learning. He has four years of experience as a student assistant to help designing and maintaining SLIS school librarianship courses. He has been publishing in nationally recognized peer-reviewed journals and conference articles on the topic of distance education. A paper on his 2008 summer faculty fellowship grant on Second Life was accepted by Association of Library and Information Science Education and the full paper has been accepted. He has been teaching Academic Libraries, Management of Information Agencies, and is developing Human Information Behavior course, all of which will be delivered online.</p>	
<p>6. Additional faculty or staff members on project</p>		
<p>7. Department funding commitments</p>		
<p>8. Number of students projected in class/program</p>	<p>Class</p>	<p>No. of students projected per year</p>
	<p>SLIS 5330 Academic Libraries</p>	<p>90-110</p>

9. Market surveys or analysis conducted	A search on UNT course catalog found no graduate-level course addressing Second Life. In summer 2008, 170 incoming students from SLIS Web Institute completed a survey on using Second Life in distance learning. Most students responded positively to the usefulness of 3D in distance education, but voices concerns with the technological difficulties of using of this new tool. Learning modules from this course will bridge the gap of technological difficulties and students' intention to use technology in Web-based distance learning.			
10. Marketing plan	The PI will advocate the course to faculty at Department of Library and Information Sciences, UNT Course Information Database, and faculty personal Homepage. The syllabus will be vigorously advocated to faculty and student list serves. Posters and flyers will be distributed at LIS student social gatherings.			
11. Evaluation plan for the course(s) or program	<p>The PI will evaluate the course based on following sources of feedback:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Organization. How were course modules organized? 2) Interaction. Did the course enhance learners' sense of community? 3) Technology Use. Did students improve technology skills through the course project? 4) Course Delivery. What was particularly successful? What parts need to be improved? <p>All feedback will be collected anonymously using Blackboard survey function. In addition, the PI will participate in an evaluation of the course through the CLEAR.</p>			
12. Timetable for course development	Activity or accomplishment	Date		
	Preparing for materials and new modules, assignments to fit Wimba and Second Life environments	January – March 2009		
	Develop modules, assignments, activities and mounted to Blackboard and Second Life virtual land.	April – June 2009		
	Pilot-testing new course	July 2009		
	Initial review, refinement, and modifications	August 2009		
	Begin teaching the course	September 2009		
13. Budget	Item or expense	Costs		
	Equipment or software (list)		0	
	Wages (show number of hours and hourly rate)	50 hours at \$10 per hour	500	
	Faculty release time salary	Summer salary	4,500	
	Total LEG Funds Requested		5,000	
14. Intellectual Property Agreement (for online courses)	Course	Faculty Member	Date Signed	
	SLIS 5330 Academic Libraries	Yunfei Du	10-20-2008	
15. CLEAR Certification	Project design is feasible			
	Wages/equipment costs are appropriate and equitable			

	Course or program approval process has been followed	
	Associate Director, CLEAR:	
16. Approval (signatures)	Department Chair:	
	Dean:	
17. Prior Funding Track Record (if applicable)	Please initial this box if you've previously received LEG funding and provide a one-page report on your project outcomes as an addendum to your proposal.	
18. Author's Commitment of Participation (signature)	Author of Proposal:	

Proposals for grants **must** be submitted on this form **no later than 5 p.m., October 24, 2008**. The completed proposal including a scan of the signature sheet (usually the last page of the application form) should be submitted as an Adobe Acrobat PDF file via attached to an email to jane.himmel@unt.edu. The signature sheet with original signatures should also be delivered to Jane Himmel, Chilton Hall, Suite 112. Questions regarding the grant program may be directed to Jane Himmel at 940.369.8137 or jane.himmel@unt.edu.