Message from the GSA President

Hello Friends! Welcome to the Graduate Student Assembly’s (GSA) bi-annual Newsletter. We are a group of creative, innovative, talented, and young minds from across the globe and throughout several established Universities and Colleges. However, as Yoko Ono once said: “A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality.” Therefore, we would like to enrich and diversify our talents, insights, efforts, enthusiasm, and inspiration to create the new structure of the future. Thus, we need you as a part of this amazing community of creative minds, and we would like to hear and share your story!

This newsletter will highlight some of the exceptional work that our membership has accomplished during the year thus far, including GSA project initiatives, a graduate program spotlight, on-going and upcoming GSA projects, individual accomplishments, and a wonderful Q-A with the current AECT President, Dr. Eugene G. Kowch.

There are still many more initiatives and contributions to come. So, look forward to other exciting news and initiatives from the Graduate Student Assembly as the year progresses. We have a wonderful community and we open our doors anyone who shares the same desire to contribute to this wonderful community of graduate students.

As usual, stay with magic,
Tugce Aldemir, GSA President
PhD Candidate
Learning, Design and Technology, Pennsylvania State University
What’s New with the GSA?! 

GSA Initiatives

GSA is off and running in the 2017-2018 cycle and has several projects ongoing. You can find out more about these projects in the following sections, and make sure you follow us on Social Media to stay up to date with upcoming events!

Check Us Out!

How is your mental health? Do you need some teaching tips? Is your job search on track? The 2017-2018 AECT-GSA Twitter and Instagram accounts have introduced a set of themes designed to help educators, researchers, and other professionals in our field find answers to these questions and share other tips, tricks, and advice on how to best navigate graduate school life. This year’s GSA social media accounts on Twitter and Instagram have rolled out a series of theme days, including Mental Health Monday, Teaching Tuesday, Career Track Thursday, Survival Saturday, and Research Sunday. Also, we have a periodic “Day in the Life” spotlight feature aimed at building community and reducing the isolation inherent to graduate school study by sharing insight into the lives of our current GSA members. The accounts also provide information about how to get involved with both GSA and AECT, and will soon be sharing information about fun (and inexpensive!) things to do in Kansas City during the convention this fall. You can follow us on Twitter @gsa_aect and Instagram at @aectgsa.

Internet Famous

Did you know AECT-GSA has a designated YouTube channel? With a mission to “provide GSA members with valuable, relevant content and information”, the channel will not only archive GSA webinars, but also release and share content related to the field. Weekly releases include division webinars, podcasts in which the AECT leadership share their experiences and offer advice, GSA member-created content (want to submit?), and curated content from outside sources. Keep an eye on the GSA social media accounts for details!

Logo Competition

The GSA has invited members and friends to participate in designing a logo capturing the essence of the GSA and its’ support through professional development, networking, and community engagement of members’ transition into the educational technology field. The creator of the winning design will be awarded $100. Finalists will be selected from designs submitted by April 15, 2018, with the winner announced by June 30, 2018. The new logo will be used in both digital and print media AECT-GSA promotion. More information regarding the Logo competition can be found here. Questions should be directed to Lucas Vasconcelos.
Graduate Program Spotlight: Oklahoma State

By: Kathy Essmiller & Dr. Tutaleni Asino

The Oklahoma State University (OSU) Educational Technology Graduate Program focuses on instructional design, effective design and implementation of online teaching, information management, multimedia design and development, and core technology integration. OSU Educational Technology graduates serve in P12 public and private schools, higher education institutions, and corporate settings. The program offers a Graduate Certificate in Online Teaching, an MS in Educational Technology, an MS in Educational Technology with an emphasis on School Library Media, and a PhD in Education with an emphasis in Educational Technology.

Graduate Certificate in Online Teaching. OSU graduate students working toward a Graduate Certificate in Online Teaching work within a model online environment to discover, develop, and implement pedagogical and technological skills of particular value in the online teaching environment. Those completing the certificate are equipped to design, develop, deliver, and sustain training for online learning environments in education, business and industry. Work accomplished toward the Graduate Certificate in Online Teaching can be integrated into the OSU Educational Technology Master’s or Doctoral degrees.

Master’s in Educational Technology. The M.S. in Educational Technology degree program includes two tracks: educational technology and school library media. The M.S. in Educational Technology engages educators and instructional support specialists in collaborations designed to help them become “highly qualified educational technologists”. The M.S. in Educational Technology - School Library Media option is accredited by the ALA through CAEP and leads to advanced certification, qualifying graduates to serve as school library media specialists in the state of Oklahoma.

Ph.D. in Education. OSU students graduating with a Ph.D. in Education, Educational Technology, have received advanced preparation to take on leadership roles in the field of educational technology. The OSU Ph.D. program emphasizes scholarship, service, and teaching. Participating students focus on research, developing a deep understanding of diversity, agency, pedagogy and technology. Graduates share their research and apply their knowledge and experience as part of national and international scholarly communities.
The Educational Media and Technology Student Association supports graduate student interest and involvement in all types of education related media and technologies. Members work in conjunction with the OSU Graduate and Professional Student Governing Association to organise, attend, and present at conferences, meetings, and workshops.

The Oklahoma State University Emerging Technologies and Creativity Research Lab (ETC Research Lab) facilitates innovative research, educational practices and learning opportunities through the use of emerging technologies. The flexible setting of the ETC Lab has been intentionally designed to galvanize playful approaches to exploration facilitating innovation, creativity, and strategic thinking (Harrison & West, 2014). Visitors to the ETC Lab initially engage willingly with technology new to them and are encouraged by both space and place (Stansberry, 2016) to identify problems and collaborate with others to implement research and identify possible solutions.

Harrison, J., & West, R. (2014). Sense of community in a blended technology integration course: A design-based research study. The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning, 16(6), 289-312.


If you would like to nominate your graduate program to be featured in the Graduate Program Spotlight, please email aectgsa17@gmail.com
On the Horizon

Our Graduate Student Assembly has several ongoing writing projects that are expected to be available via the Graduate Member Musings column in TechTrends within the next year. These projects, along with other writing involvement opportunities are discussed in detail below!

GSA Members Writing for Graduate Member Musings
The Graduate Student Assembly has been hard at work this past year, attempting to provide division members an opportunity to get published in the Graduate Member Musings section of TechTrends. Nate Turcotte, the current GSA communications officer is currently leading an article aimed at providing and “inside look” at the GSA and how the assembly functions. His article, which is written in collaboration with a group of current GSA members, will discuss the opportunities that arise with leadership in the GSA, expectations that the GSA has of its members, and personal vignettes of division representative’s experiences. Another GSA member, Stacie Slusher is also working hard to put together a Graduate Member Musings article that will give an overview of what AECT members can expect at the 2018 annual convention in Kansas City.

GSA Providing A Space for Graduate Students to Collaborate and Share Ideas
As the GSA has greatly encouraged opportunities to write and share ideas, members have come together to create a space where both graduate students who are GSA members along with graduate students who are nonmembers are able to collaborate and further their ideas. Utilizing the platform Slack, the GSA has created an environment where current graduate students are able to propose and get feedback on ideas, as well as collaborate on various writing projects. The overall goal is to provide a space for current graduate students to collaborate and produce scholarly work, and so far, this has been an overwhelming success. Currently a group of graduate students are sharing ideas on gamification, and they are looking to produce a potential article on gamification and how it can be used in the online education. Moreover, there is another article idea being tossed around that includes tips and tricks for reviewing conference proposals. If you’re interested in getting involved, or you would like to share your article ideas and get feedback, please contact aectgsa17@gmail.com.

Are You Looking to Publish?!
Are you interested in publishing? Do you have a unique outlook or educational experience to share? Are you looking to publish a non-academic or non-empirical work? Do you want to make your voice heard? The TechTrends Graduate Member Musings column is looking for people like you! Graduate Member Musings provides the opportunity for graduate students to share their experiences, transcending the different educational fields and the academic programs within it, in an official AECT publication. Submitted works are approximately 1000 words in length; topics reflect the unique needs, experiences, situations, and voices of graduate students within AECT.

Past published articles include: “Virtual Design Tips to Develop an Inviting Poster for Poster Presentations,” by Kei Tomita, “Student Visa Approved, Beam Me Up Scotty!: Being a Legal Alien in American Graduate School,“ by Tugce Aldemir and Eunsung Park, and “Graduate Student Reflections on Working Creativity Before and After Ideation with Dr. Chris Bilton,” by Jessica Resig, Alison Moore, Jiya Bong, and Beth Allred Oyarzun. If you are interested in publishing, please contact Jennifer Englund. We look forward to reading about your experiences!

Learning from Failure
Though failure is a part of life, you do not have to let it hinder your abilities or impede your dreams! The Graduate Student Assembly wants to know how you learned from your failures as a graduate student. In what situations did you fail? What did you learn? Did this failure benefit you (in the long or short term)? If so, how did this failure benefit you? The GSA is seeking graduate students who are willing to share these unique experiences. If you are interested in sharing your story then please contact Lucas Vasconcelos.
Graduate Student Questions Answered by Dr. Kowch

How do I get faculty to support my research? How can AECT support my research? What are the benefits of joining AECT as a graduate student?

Dear Well-Supported Graduate Student:
The best way to engage faculty in support of your research is to build relationships with them so that you can explain the potential impact of your research or the problem you hope to resolve in that research. Finding them well is your first challenge as a student. Be brave. Search. By being part of AECT, you can network and connect to thousands of ‘birds of a feather’ professors or practitioners around the world. This can be done by participating as a GSA (Graduate Student Association) representative in one of our many AECT governance groups (Divisions), special task forces or committees. As well, you can gain support and glean expertise/advice for your research by simply attending webinars, the annual convention or our summer board building/leadership events – making friends with faculty who share your perspectives and research interest. Many faculty who are AECT members can join your graduate supervision or examination committees, write funding recommendation letters, or job reference letters to support our newest family members (grad students). I stand today on faculty promotion and tenure committees for AECT colleagues in the same way as I do stand for my graduate students in helping them set their research direction and helping with grants and publications. Our family endures... it’s a lot better to have a ‘bird of a feather’ network than to stand out there alone where you’re the only bird in gaggle of lizards. AECT has given me that safe, fun nest as a growing professional.

How am I supposed to balance research life and professional life without closing doors to other opportunities?

Dear Tightrope-Walking Grad Student:
Tightrope walking is the new normal. We all feel the pressure to balance research and professional (and personal) life. But as Karl Wallenda said “Life is on the wire, the rest is just waiting”. No one will admit what I think everyone feels about this but deep down, most of us realize we are not great tightrope walkers. While balancing is a good thing Bill Gates advises to lose our balance a bit now and then, or to accept that it’s a near-impossible goal. A loss of balance can lead to mistakes, and mistakes can be very helpful to our growth because some of life’s best lessons are from making mistakes (fortunately in our work, the floor below the rope isn’t too far away, and others are often there to catch us as service providers). In graduate school, I never felt that I had a research-professional balance even when I working both as a school principal and a doctoral student while completing my doctoral research, but I learned to enjoy the walk(s) very much, to wear different hats and to say ‘no’ more often when professional work and research seemed unrelated.

How can I get the mentoring I want from my advisor?

Dear Mentor Magnet:
While sometimes opposites attract, we most often see success in a mentor/mentee relationship when the ‘getting’ of mentorship matches with the desire of mentors to ‘give’ it. People also forget that a good mentorship experience rejuvenates a seasoned mentor as well. In today’s world, the onus is a lot more on the mentee to eek out and find a mentor that’s a match where the mentee directs that process as much as possible.
Our constructivist world has (thankfully), left behind the days of apprentice-servant slaving at the foot of a guildmaster-goddess in our profession. Yet knowledge giants exist among newbies and they thrive together. As a mentor for many graduate students and other professionals, I respect the new generation of students who “check out” my experience, publications, research approach and philosophy before asking for my advice/mentorship. These people grill me (nicely) about why I do what I do, and how they might benefit from proximity to that. I really respect that a lot. The more self-directed graduate students who seek a match (and follow your instincts in this too) of personality, academic and philosophical interests today usually finds a great mentor who stays the course for you, with you until your next mentor comes along – for that next stage in your career journey requiring different mentoring. If school policy denies you this as a mentee, rage against that policy or start looking beyond it. On this trip, you drive, mentor magnet. AECT gives you thousands of mentors to connect with. A good mentor can connect you to worlds you want to explore, not give you ‘answers’ alone. Be fearless.

What are the strategies you use to help you be a productive writer?

**Dear Productive Writer:**
Set time aside to brainstorm and to write. Create outlines, concept maps and scratchpads with your ideas. Know your reader, what the publisher is looking for and above all, reduce jargon to a minimum while you craft a major message that offers new insights to the reader. Collaborate with seasoned writers for your first publications, for there is a ‘language’ for peer reviewed proposals and publications that cannot be taught in class. Jot ideas down on your phone whenever great questions arise. Above all, don’t fear (peer review) rejection of your writing. Embrace it. Some of the best ideas are so different that they don’t make sense to others on the first try – rejection could be the sign of your inner genius and radical research making its first important impact. Keep submitting. Be even more fearless.

What is new in the Educational Technology field, and what do we have to look forward to in the future (in the next 10 years)?

**Dear Horizon-Peering Graduate Student:**
As an experienced member in our great field I often get this question from the best graduate students: What is new in the educational technology field, and what do we have to look forward to in the future? My best answer is: “You tell me!” Graduate students peer more deeply into the future than many of us, for they use new eyes, new lenses. They see things experienced scholars and practitioners can miss. So really, I look to graduate students for these long-range trends. What I see from that is a new sense that the learner is more self-directed, that learning environments are becoming participative, negotiated spaces among many people (including AI machines), and that design is becoming more important every second. We are drowning in information and opportunity, repeating the errors of our elders when we create more democracy, less choice and ignore diversity. The next generation of leaders and thinkers in our field are already working on interdisciplinary design thinking where the learner, learning, designer and institutional system work in complex, ever changing ecosystems to support everyone toward better learning and better living. There’s the future. A study more of people and less of machines, more of designs and complex adaptive learning than of assessment, more of self-direction in networks than of ‘the one’ great innovator who will change the world. It’s a team thing. Learn how to lead and follow at the same time.

*Sincerely,*

*Dr. Eugene Kowch*
Graduate Student Assembly Member
Shout-Outs!

Our GSA members have a long history of being stellar leaders in the community. To recognize their scholarly efforts and hard work, we have included some of the most recent accomplishments by current and past members of the GSA!

Presentations:

**Bryant, H. V., & Bolliger, D. U.** (2017, October 12). Professional Development, Copyright, and Online Instructor Needs. Paper presentation at the Northern Rocky Mountain Education Research Association, Boulder, CO.

**Budhrani, K.** (2017, November). A Korean perspective on smart learning environments, smart pedagogy, and smart learners. Poster presentation at the Association for Educational Communications and Technology Conference, Jacksonville, FL.


Publications:


