

Revision of the Onsite MEd in Instructional Systems Technology Rationale for program changes

The Masters in Instructional Systems Technology is a credential focused on preparation for practice in the field. Following the institution of our online program in 2000, we have seen the students in the online and onsite programs sort out into several groups:

- New career (first time seeking a job and using this degree)
- Career changers (working in one of multiple domains and moving to instructional design)
- Career extenders (working in one of multiple domains and adding instructional design as a perspective, knowledge base and/or skill set)
- Career improvers (moving up or laterally within an existing instructional design context of work)

Every group *except the first one* is best served in the online program where the curriculum is geared to students who apply learning directly to their workplaces and where the program comes to them online without requiring interruption of their established careers. Over time, enrollments have migrated significantly to the online program.

The department remains committed to serving the first group of students, who represent young adults moving into the practice of instructional design as their first career. The onsite program has seen some improvement in enrollments following a recent redesign in which we instituted a six-credit internship requirement, which offers a bridge to practice.

Since our previous program revision the field is seeing shifts in pedagogical perspectives toward the studio format associated with preparation for design practice. Historically our program has been a leader in the field and we are a leader in the scholarship related to this pedagogical shift now. We propose to remain a leader in the effective preparation of practicing instructional designers via this program revision which merges studio pedagogy with our stable core of tradition instructional design courses.

Studio pedagogy is often characterized by:

- Design problem setting at a high of difficulty, low specification of process, and high levels of expert support in the studio
- Intentional co-mingling of students at multiple stages of their studies, encouraging their mutual engagement in learning
- Continuity of learning goals across the span of a program, sometimes represented as multi-term projects
- Concurrent acquisition of declarative and applied understandings leveraging the motivation of self-selected, challenging development and production goals

Summary of changes

- Four of the five existing core courses in the program remain the same, acquiring a relationship to the three studio courses that are now required in the program, and running concurrently to them.

- One core course, R541 *Instructional Development and Production Process I*, will move to join the courses defined as studio. The objectives of this course will not change, and the format is close to studio now; therefore this course will not undergo official revision.
- Two existing courses (not offered recently), *R641 Instructional Development and Production Process II* and *R741 Instructional Development and Production Process III*, will be revised from their existing traditional formats to studio formats, retaining the general thrust of their objectives.
- The internship requirement is replaced with an optional 3-credit internship; the integrated practice of instructional design will be located in the studio experience.
- A capstone project will be added to the current portfolio as extra-curricular requirements for graduation. The capstone project will be both proposed and defended as events associated with the studio courses.

Program requirements

Program requirements comprise 12 credits of core courses, 12 credits in studio and capstone, 3 elective credits in the major, and 9 credits taken outside the major.

Courses in the major

Core courses (required)

R511	Instructional and Performance Technologies Foundations	3
R521	Instructional Design and Development I	3
R561	Evaluation and Change in the Instructional Development Process	3
R621	Analysis for Instruction and Performance Improvement	3

Studio and Capstone (taken consecutively; with approval of the student's advisor and department chair, R741 may be taken concurrently with the second instance of R641.)

R541	Instructional Development and Production Process I	3
R641	Instructional Development and Production Process II	3
R641	Instructional Development and Production Process II	3
R741	Instructional Development and Production Process III	3

Electives in the major

3 elective credits in the major are required.

Electives outside the major

9 credits are required outside the major; with consent of the advisor, these are selected to support the student's interests 9 credits

Extra-curricular requirement for graduation

Portfolio

Each student assembles a professional portfolio independently during the last term of the program, working to a timeline and review schedule set by the department

Portfolio Committee and seeking guidance from that committee or from the academic advisor.

Capstone Project

Working in teams of between 2- 5, students propose a capstone project of substantial scope focused on an instructional/performance need in a context where they can conduct their analysis and evaluation activities. The capstone proposal is approved following review no later than the end of term when the first instance of R641 studio is taken, and defended during the term of the R741 studio.