

President's Report
July 20, 2009

3D Technology and Immersive Education are Changing the Way Lansing Community College Delivers Instruction

As early as 2003, higher education institutions, especially in the Northeastern part of the United States, have used immersive education, which is a game-based learning platform that combines interactive 3D graphics, commercial game technology, virtual reality, voice over IP (VoIP), and digital media with collaborative face to face classrooms and online course environments to *'immerse and engage'* students in the same way that today's best video games grab and keep the attention of players. Immersive Education enables both self-directed learning as well as collaborative group-based learning. By using full-screen interactive 3D game technology Immersive Education gives students a sense of "being there". Lansing Community College is now entering this realm with its new 3D presentation and production labs.

Although new in terms of availability at Lansing Community College, the concept of Immersive Education is not new. The notion of "serious games" is a hot topic for the video game industry, the business sector, and academia alike. After years of speculation we are seeing state-of-the-art game technology flow into the classroom, enabling the classroom itself to morph into completely virtual environment. This technology reduces the need for expensive equipment and allows students to learn classroom material in a shorter period of time. Applications enabled by this type of media include, but are not limited to: on-demand digital cinema and interactive movies, film and movie rendering; truly immersive multiplayer games and virtual reality, real-time visualization for complex data (weather, medical, engineering, and so forth); telepresence and telemedicine (remote surgery, medical imaging, drug design, etc.); vehicle and aircraft design and simulation; other applications that produce or consume digital media.

At Lansing Community College, this type of technology will be first used in the Business, Media, and Information Technologies Division in the Art, Design, and Multimedia Program where students will work as artists, modelers, animators, actors, and developers of course material to develop highly interactive three-dimensional (3D) multimedia courseware libraries to be used throughout media, science, healthcare, and technical careers programs across campus. The long-term goal of the Art, Design, and Multimedia Program is to be a Center of Excellence in Innovation and Edutainment and to collaborate with other educational institutions around the country to design highly-interactive media for arts and entertainment industries.

Lansing Community College presentation and production lab will be ready for students for the start of fall, 2009 classes; a public grand-opening will be held on Thursday, September 17, 2009. Mark your calendars to stop by the grand opening to see how the delivery of instruction is rapidly changing in education.

Judith K. Berry, Dean