

Ingenuity has its rewards

Dr. Gasevic has also been awarded a 2008 Alberta Ingenuity New Faculty Award worth \$288,860 over three years. Gasevic's application was one of 37 received by the Alberta Ingenuity Fund. Alberta Ingenuity was established to develop competitive science and engineering expertise in the province. The New Faculty Award Program provides seed money for funding recipients' first laboratories and programs



DR. BETH PERRY, WITH
DR. MARGARET EDWARDS

Photo: Blaise MacMullin

New learning technology

Primary investigator Dr. Beth Perry, with Dr. Margaret Edwards, both of AU's Centre for Nursing and Health Studies, are adapting a research technique called Photovoice as an online teaching tool to encourage learning through active participation. Their research is funded by the Western Region Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing.

Photovoice was originally developed as a data collection technique. Researchers gave subjects cameras to record images of their communities. Photovoice appears to focus student attention, stimulate creative thinking, help create community and convey a sense of human presence in the online educational experience. Edwards and Perry will use this basis to create a user-friendly, pedagogically sound, interactive teaching technology that can be used in a range of online experiences.

Photo: Ellis Brothert Photography



DR. KINSHUK

Personalised learning on the go

Dr. Kinshuk, director of the School for Computing and Information Systems at AU, has completed a series of lectures in Japan in association with a short-term research fellowship from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. Its Invitation Fellowship Program promotes international co-operation and mutual understanding through scientific research.

At Tokyo Denki University, Kinshuk lectured on "Adaptivity and Personalization in Mobile Learning." He has been assessing research on adapting mobile learning to individual learners. Aspects of location, context, device and learner modeling can be adjusted to customize "delivery of multimedia-rich learning

objects, collaborative problem-solving in the context of learners' surroundings, authentic problem-solving through multiple forms of input, and appropriate use of these different media formats as part of problem-solving for rich learning experiences," he says.

At Hitachi Software, he lectured on "Adaptivity and Personalization in Learning Systems through Cognitive Modelling." Of that research, he says, cognitive capabilities of learners can be identified through pattern detection in their work. These patterns could contribute to automatic customization of their learning activities, which would optimize each individual's experience.

Virtual calculus

Improving poor success rates in first-year calculus is the goal of a project that's developing five interactive online multimedia tutorials in pre-university algebra over the course of one year. Athabasca University is partnering on the project with the Canadian Virtual University, which is a group of Canadian universities specializing in online and distance education. Funding of \$112,000 has been awarded by the Inukshuk Wireless Fund, which supports the creation of content that can be carried on the Canada-wide wireless broadband network Bell Canada and Rogers Communications are building through their Inukshuk Wireless partnership.

Journal receives 25K award

The International Review of Research on Open and Distance Learning, a peer-reviewed journal supported by Athabasca University, has received a \$25,000 award from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council's Aid to Scholarly Publication Program. To win this award, the maximum allowed under the program, the journal's editorial board submitted documentation of the influence and reputation of the journal, its recent download statistics and details of its peer review process.

Newly appointed

Dr. Sharon Moore, associate professor in the Centre for Nursing and Health Studies, has been appointed to the Seniors' Advisory Committee, one of eight advisory committees of the Mental Health Commission of Canada. This national initiative is based on the Senate Committee report "Out of the Shadows at Last: Transforming Mental Health, Mental Illness and Addiction Services in Canada," the first national study conducted of these issues.