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COE faculty to present at Friday's Eagle Techxpo

September 14, 2016

On Friday, the University's annual Eagle Techxpo will showcase the latest technology for the classroom, workplace, and home. Faculty members from the leadership, technology, and human development department are scheduled to conduct two presentations.

Assistant Professor Lucas Jensen, Ph.D., will present a workshop on the evolution of text-based adventure games and branching narratives with a focus on Twine, an open-source tool for telling interactive, nonlinear stories on the web. Jensen will discuss his experience in utilizing this technology to create a learning experience for various audiences in settings including weekend workshops for children, evening classes at libraries, summer youth programs, and middle school classrooms. He has also included the use of Twine in his online courses and professional development opportunities for educators.

Jensen's presentation is entitled "Creating Text Adventures, Branching Narratives, and Interactive Fiction Twine" and will take place at 2 p.m. in room 2203 of the Information Technology Building.

Assistant Professors Mete Akcaoglu, Ph.D., and Eunbae Lee, Ph.D., will also be presenting on Friday. Their workshop will demonstrate to attendees the ongoing research and activities of the [Innovation Studio](#), a space in the College of Education dedicated to serving educators, students, staff, youth, and local community members to foster a culture of innovation and provide experience with cutting technology. Akcaoglu and Eunbae will demonstrate the use of new tools such as littleBits, Sphero Robots, and Lego robotics and how this technology can support students' skill development for STEM related activities.

Akcaoglu and Lee's presentation is entitled "Innovation Studio at College of Education" and will take place at 2 p.m. in room 2205 in the Information Technology Building.

Eagle Techxpo is a free event and is open to all members of campus as well as the community. Door prizes will be given away at each presentation.

COE's William-Johnson is recipient of University Award for Excellence in Instruction

September 14, 2016



Pictured third from the left, Meca Williams-Johnson, Ph.D. received the University's Excellence in Instruction Award at the University's Fall 2016 convocation.

Associate Professor Meca Williams-Johnson, Ph.D., was awarded Georgia Southern University's Award for Excellence in Instruction presented during the annual Fall Convocation earlier this semester.

Drawing on her previous experience as a middle school educator, Williams-Johnson said that she has always wanted to serve as an advocate for educators and youth who are seeking the best options for their educational circumstances. Currently, she teaches research courses in the College of Education for students from undergraduate to doctorate levels. Williams-Johnson explains that she enjoys research because it allows students to investigate critical problems in teaching and learning.

"I encourage students to pursue individual research topics on whatever interests them," she explained. The topics, she says, are immense. Research spans from STEM education to a comparative study of women's education. "Nothing limits you—only your imagination," Williams-Johnson said of educational research.

In the classroom, Williams-Johnson says she teaches by "storytelling" and sharing of experiences. She emphasizes to students the positive effects research experience can have including the likelihood of both the attendance and completion of graduate school as well as future career achievements. Her courses require many applicable projects such as mandatory and elective research assignments, and she

encourages research conference participation. Williams-Johnson also takes the time to mentor students through the journal publication process.

Kent Rittschof, Ph.D., chair of the curriculum, foundations, and reading department, explained that Williams-Johnson earned this award because she goes “above and beyond” the requirements of her position regarding her dedication to students.

“Her high level of commitment in supporting students’ learning needs is seen in her classrooms, her online courses, her supervision of departmental graduate assistants and doctoral fellows, her research on educational practices, and her many service leadership roles on and off campus that have direct impact on our Georgia Southern students,” Rittschof said. “I have observed that Dr. Williams-Johnson continually strives for effective collaboration on curricular and instructional matters, and for improvement of teaching even while working at a very high level.”

Williams-Johnson joined Georgia Southern’s College of Education in 2006 and says that to this day she is honored to have the opportunity to be a part of the Eagle Nation.