

# The World of Distance Learning

## **ANDREA Volume 4, Number 1, 1997**

The first issue of ANDREA for 1997 contains an article by Johan Van Heddegem on the TEN Project and courses. The project involves connecting a network of European centres - Dublin, Lueren, Lisbon, Stafford, Thessaloniki, and Ellaga - to a central station in Madrid to create a virtual classroom. The image of the teacher is displayed on screens in each centre along with any documents in use. Students in the remote centres can interact directly with the teacher and have access to graphic tools and a shared whiteboard. Off-line access is by e-mail and computer conferencing. During the period of the project some 200 hours will be available to 700 learners in universities and large enterprises, with both undergraduate and graduate papers being offered. This experiment is being carried out using a fully integrated network of VSAT, ISDN and LAN Ethernet technology with national and trans-European coverage. The project is supported in part by the European Commission.

Additional information is available at <http://www.fundesco.es/ten/>

## ***The European Journal for Open and Distance Learning***

The European Distance Education Network (EDEN) is establishing a new electronic journal, the *European Journal for Open and Distance Learning*. An interim editorial board, chaired by Erling Ljosa (NKS, Norway), has been established. The intention is to offer various types of contributions based on a house style with 'short versions' in three languages, English, German and French. Publication will be continuous rather than based on issues published at specific dates. The editors are Martin Valcke, Open Universiteit, Netherlands, and Anne Bruce,

Scottish Council of Educational Technology.

## ***The Fifth Annual EDEN Conference***

The fifth annual EDEN conference was held from 8-10 July 1996 in the Palais des Congres, Futuroscope, near Poitiers, France. The theme of the conference was Lifelong Learning, Open Learning, Distance Learning. Among the 100 papers presented were case studies, innovative uses of new technologies, organisational and staff training issues, new developments in Central and Eastern Europe, collaborative links and networks, and open and distance learning for school-age children. The 252 delegates included representatives from Canada, the United States of America, Australia, China, and New Zealand.

Details can be found on <http://www.open.ac.uk/partners/eden>

## ***Conferences 1997***

**2-6 JUNE 1997:** The New Learning Environment: A Global Perspective. The 18th ICDE World Conference, at the Pennsylvania State University, USA. The conference explored the challenges and opportunities facing the global education community in the new environment being created by the rapid evolution of digital technology. The conference focused on four themes - the changing technological environment; the new educational paradigm; technology, education and sustainable development; and opportunities for international cooperation.

There were seven pre-conferences associated with ICDE'97. They were:

- The CREAD/IBM Workshop: Toward a Virtual University, 30-31 May 1997.
- Distance Education and National Development: Research Perspectives, 29-31

May 1997.

- Innovations in Distance Education: Principles and Practices from a Faculty Perspective, 30 May 1997.
- Medical Education by Distance and Open Learning, 31 May-1 June 1997.
- Faculty Development Programmes for Distance Education, 31 May 1997.
- The International Co-Production Consortium, 31 May-1 June 1997.
- Institute of Educational Technology, 31 May - 1 June 1997.

Further information is available at <http://www.cde.psu.edu/ICDE/>

**23-25 JUNE 1997:** Open and Distance Learning: A bridge from the 90s to the year 2000 and beyond: Achievements and perspectives. The Sixth Eden Annual Conference, at the Technical University of Budapest, Hungary. Up-to-date information can be found on the EDEN home page at <http://www.open.ac.uk/Partners/EDEN>

**17-19 SEPTEMBER 1997:** Open Classroom Conference, Crete, Greece. This second Open Classroom Conference is being organised by the Lambrakis Research Foundation and the European Distance Education Network. The conference has four themes:

- Educational multimedia and flexible/open learning environments: on-line and off-line multimedia products to support open learning processes.
- Distance learning services in education at school level: application fields, user needs, technologies, communication infrastructure, IPR handling.
- Operational models in school education: learning models, classroom settings, school establishments, evaluation of products, school-community interfaces.
- 'European schools network': national, European and international initiatives and pilot projects, financial support, and good practice.

Further information is available at <http://openclass.lrf.gr:8080>

**23-25 SEPTEMBER 1997:** The convergence of distance and conventional education: patterns of flexibility for the individual learner. The Cambridge International Conference on Open and Distance Learning, Cambridge, England.

**29 SEPTEMBER-3 OCTOBER 1997:** Open, flexible and distance learning: education and training in the 21st century, University of Tasmania, Launceston. This conference, organised by the Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia, in association with the Australian Association of Distance Education Schools, will explore seven major themes: shifting paradigms - the impact of globalisation on open, flexible and distance learning; technological issues; educational leadership; partnerships in education and industry; customising education and training; team building; and research and development and continuing professional development.

Expressions of interest may be posted to the ODLAA Forum Home Page at <http://www.comm.utas.edu.au/Notices/odlaa.htm>

### ***The International Course on Open and Distance Learning***

The Open University is again offering an intensive four week training course on open and distance learning. The course, in its eight year, will be held at the Open University's campus in Milton Keynes from 8 September to 3 October. The course involves a core programme in which participants will learn how to plan an open and distance learning system; determine the learner profile; establish a student database; work in course teams; produce learning materials; select appropriate media; use information technology; assess the quality and effectiveness of open and distance learning materials; design and format open learning texts; establish student support systems; set up on-line tutoring; establish student assessment systems; and evaluate systems. A personal programme is interwoven with the core.

This course is part of the Open University's

Institute of Educational Technology's Programme of Professional Development in Educational Technology for Open and Distance Learning. The Institute has a home page at <http://www-iet.open.ac.uk/PDET/International>.

Further details about the course can be obtained from the Course Director whose e-mail address is [k.pole@open.ac.uk](mailto:k.pole@open.ac.uk)

### ***The Journal of Instructional Science and Technology***

Volume 1, No.4 of the Journal of Instructional Science and Technology is available at <http://www.usq.edu.au/electpub/e-jist/homepage.htm>

This issue focuses on the use of new technologies, particularly those involving networking activities through the use of computer-mediated communication. One paper deals with networking and the learning organisation, and a second offers an evaluation of the professional development programme of the Queensland Open Learning Network.

### ***The American Journal of Distance Learning***

Volume 10, No.2 of the *American Journal of Distance Learning* contains a major article on technology and distance learning and a series of responses. The article, by Chris Dede, is entitled 'The evolution of distance education emerging technologies and distributed learning'. Responses are offered by Philip C. Abrami and Eva Mary Bures - 'Computer-supported collaborative learning;' Gary Mcl. Boyd - 'Emergence for whom? A commentary on Chris Dede's "The evolution of distance education;"' Chere Campbell Gibson - 'Towards emerging technologies and distance learning; Challenges and change;' Peter Holt - 'A response to Chris Dede;' Roger Kaufman - 'Some possible reality therapy for the would-be innovators: a response to Chris Dede;' Gregg Kearsley - 'Education as usual: comments on Chris Dede's article;' Michael P.

Lambert - 'Keeping fixed on the objective: reflections on distance education's future;' Farhad Saba - 'Dede's distributed learning: a system perspective;' Erv Schieman and Tom Jones - 'Revisiting the medium/design debate ...again:a response to Chris Dede;' Thomas W.Smith - 'A response to Chris Dede;' and Chris Dede - 'Chris Dede's response.'

### ***Distance Online Education Symposium (DEOS)***

DEOS Volume 7, No.1 contains two full length book reviews. The first, by Tony Bates, Director of Distance Education and Technology at the University of British Columbia, reviews *Why the information highway? Lessons from open and distance learning*, edited by Judy Roberts and Erin Keough (Trifolium Books, Toronto, 1995, pp 276). The book, which focuses on the Canadian experience, has three parts. Part 1 deals with emerging issues in open and distance learning, Part 2 with case studies, and Part 3 with, *inter alia*, analysis, research and evaluation.

The second review, by Zane Berge, Director of Training Systems, JSD Graduate Programs at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, is of Starr Roxanne Hiltz's book, *The virtual classroom: learning without limits via computer networks* (Ablex, Norwood, 1994, pp. 406).

### ***Web Pages of Interest***

Readers may find the following web pages of interest:

- Commonwealth of Open Learning: <http://www.col.org> - for publications, COL activities, and general information.
- International Centre for Distance Learning of the Open University: <http://www.open.uk/ou.ou.htm/> - for details of distance education literature and information on Commonwealth distance education institutions and courses.

- The University of Wisconsin: <http://www.uwex.edu/disted/qde/references.html> - for distance programmes available from a range of institutions.
- The Open University: <http://www.open.ac.uk/ou.ou.htm/> - for information about the Open University and its courses.

A search of the Internet using the word 'distance education' will yield many hundreds of web pages.

### ***World-Wide Database of Distance Learning***

The Open University and Hobsons Publishing are publishing a series of guides to distance learning opportunities at all educational levels. The first world-wide guide to institutions and departments offering distance learning options will be published in September of this year, with further guides to follow.

*The information is also available at [http://www.distance\\_learning.co.uk](http://www.distance_learning.co.uk)*

### ***New National Distance Education Body for South Africa***

A new national distance education body has been established in South Africa. It is the National Association of Distance Education Organisations (NADEOSA). The Association aims to:

- facilitate collaboration among distance education organisations in South Africa;
- advocate awareness, understanding, and application of distance education amongst policy makers, practitioners and learners;
- promote research and evaluation of distance learning in South Africa;
- exert influence with regard to adequate policy (including financial support) for distance education;
- advance the professional interests of distance education practitioners; and
- promote and enhance quality assurance in distance education.

The Association held its inaugural conference in August 1996.