The Mursion@ECU Experience has been Improved for Faculty and Students

The Mursion team has been hard at work making Mursion the best experience for you and your students as possible and making it an innovation that is here to stay. Convenience, Consistency, and Class are the three big areas of focus.

Convenience

In the spring, we began a Mursion license. What this means for those using Mursion, is sessions can be scheduled as little as a week prior when using an established scenario and sessions can be much shorter as well. We recommend sessions no shorter than 30 minutes, but they can go as long as needed. An easy scheduler is now available for scheduling at ecumursion.simplybook.me/ to make it easy to plan. A Mursion Repository has been created in Blackboard to allow faculty to access available scenarios, view Mursion sessions, retrieve their class sessions, and collaborate with other faculty members on Mursion development and research.

Online Mursion Pilot

We have had an overwhelming request to use Mursion in online classes. Until now we have not had that ability, but we are now ready to pilot that with up to 4 faculty members with their online classes. If you are interested in piloting Mursion in your online classes, please send an email to mursion@ecu.edu.

New Mursion GA Available in Lab

Beginning Summer II, a new GA, Mandy Nichols, was brought on to help with Mursion. She is currently working toward her masters in Instructional Technology, but is already an ECU alum, having been a Maynard Scholar while earning her BS in Secondary English Education.

As you will be seeing her in the lab often, her seven years of classroom teaching experience should prove quite valuable to our teacher candidates as they practice and look forward to getting into the classroom.

Consistency

Purchasing the Mursion license also afforded us the opportunity to hired a dedicated interactor who conducts all of our Mursion sessions. Having our own interactor allows faculty to use the lab multiple times and always have the same experience with the avatars. It also ensures that the person who helps develop the scenario, is the same one who is actually using it when the class comes in. He is very helpful when it comes to writing new scenarios in offering feedback. During his time with Mursion, he has become a Simulation Specialist, a Sim Specialist Trainer, a Scenario Designer, a Facilitator Trainer, and a part of their overall development team. Prior to joining Mursion and ECU, he has worked in the entertainment community for over 20 years. He’s
toured the country as a comedian, host and actor. He's done film and television. He was a part of the UCF BFA Theatre program. His improvisational skills have been honed in part through training, but mostly by working for all 3 major theme parks in Orlando for the past 20 years. He is working out of Orlando and is readily available to work with you as you develop new scenarios and refine established ones to meet your needs.

Class

Over the summer, the lab went through a transformation. No longer will you find a rolling TV cart and a screen pulled over a blacked out window. Today you will find a 90” television screen on an adjustable mount that allows us to move the screen to the appropriate height for the activity. The avatars appear almost life-sized. The lab also allows more freedom with the entire audio system hidden in the ceiling.

There is no longer a need for the person working with Mursion to have to hold a microphone and the sound surrounds everyone.

We would like to show you all of these new features and teach you how Mursion works. To do that, we invite you to participate in one of the four upcoming Mursion Introduction/Facilitator Training sessions. The sessions will be held Sept. 13 at 9-10 am or 2-3 pm and Sept. 28 at 9-10 am or 2-3 pm, register in Cornerstone.

Mursion Educator Development Grant Workshop

On July 27th, the Mursion team hosted leaders from six counties who will be participating in the in the Mursion@ECU Educator Development Grant program during the 2017-2018 school year. Districts were awarded with up to 25 hours of Mursion simulations for professional development. Awardees included Beaufort, Edenton-Chowan, Gates, Hertford, Lenoir and Pitt County schools as well as a separate award for Pactolus School. The workshop provided an opportunity for teams from each site to create their professional development plan and develop custom scenarios to utilize with teachers. Cindy Olson of Edenton-Chowan Schools commented, “The atmosphere was very friendly and fun. It made doing the “work” of scenarios fun and doable.”

Overall, the Mursion@ECU Educator Development program has the potential to reach 225 beginning teachers and over 23,000 students. Themes that emerged from the workshop included classroom management activities such as behavior management, activity transitions, engagement and discourse; effective communication with parents and other stakeholders; and strategies to practice theory- and research-based pedagogy. Applications for 2018-19 available in March at www.ecu.edu/Mursion
NSF Grant Awarded to for the use of Mursion to Practice Discourse

East Carolina University College of Education was recently awarded an NSF grant Improving Undergraduate STEM Education strand in the amount of $599,939. The project, Interactive STEM Education Competence in Teaching, will address the nature and role of discipline-specific discourse and argumentation. The goal of the project is an empirical exploration of immersive classroom simulation activities (ICSAs) on pre-service mathematics and science teachers’ competence and confidence in discourse use. Traditional teaching simulation activities such as peer-to-peer role-play are limited, brief, and challenging to replicate to provide sufficient practice for discourse skill development. Virtual simulation provides immersive, interactive learning and gives candidates an opportunity to practice complex skills, which cannot be replicated with typical fieldwork, and thus, enables practice-based teacher development. Principal investigator, Daniel Dickerson, Associate Professor -Science Education, along with Co-PI’s Holly Fales and Christine Wilson, Instructional Technology Consultants and Mursion Coordinators; Carrie Lee, Assistant Professor-Math Education; and Ricky Castles, Assistant Professor-Engineering, will lead the research in this study. During the project, students taking Elementary Math and Science method courses will participate in Mursion simulations in which discourse skills in the form of teacher moves will be coded and analyzed. Teacher moves will then be measured in videos submitted by participants from the teaching internship to measure the impact of immersive simulation preparation during methods courses on discourse and engagement skills in the live classroom. The project will begin in Fall 2017 and continue for three years.

Mursion Timeline

We would love to have you use Mursion in your class or workshop! In order to do so, there are some key steps that need to be taken and a timeline that needs to be adhered to in order for that to happen.

8 Weeks prior to Session

- Mursion Facilitator Training
  - Complete Online Mursion Facilitator training via Blackboard. This training will cover topics such as: scenario design, scheduling, best practices, live facilitation, and research opportunities.

2-3 Weeks prior to Session

- Schedule Simulation Sessions
  - After designing a scenario and scheduling simulation sessions using our online scheduler at http://evmursion.simplifybook.me/
  - Sessions can be scheduled Monday-Friday from 8am-6pm. Select Saturdays are available from 8am-12pm with at least 3 weeks advance notice.

5 Weeks prior to Session

- Scenario Selection
  - After choosing a practical skill to focus on in the simulation, select a scenario from the Mursion@ECU Scenario Repository or work with the Mursion coordinators to design your own custom scenario. The custom scenario development process can take up to 5.

1 Week prior to Session

- Finalize Class Simulation Logistics/Time
  - We recommend no more than 5 participants in the Mursion lab during live simulation sessions. If desired, you can reserve a room near Spiegel 228 so the remainder of class participants can observe via a live feed while they wait for their simulation time. Please have your student groups arranged prior to the live simulation day.

Mursion Session*

- Final Preparation
  - Inform participants to arrive a few minutes early for their session and wait in the reserved classroom or hallway until the lab is ready. Session facilitators will need to arrive in the lab at least 10 minutes prior to the session start time. For technical check and scenario verification, facilitators are expected to attend all live sessions.

5 Days after Session

- Videos in Blackboard
  - When the Mursion lab is used, simulation recordings will be uploaded to VoiceThread allowing instructors to debrief with learners via Blackboard and continue to use the Mursion experience as a learning tool.

K-20 Professional Development Workshop at ECU in June.

We are currently accepting proposals for the workshop. For more information, please visit www.ecu.edu/Mursion and click on Summer Workshop.

*Mursion sessions can be cancelled only with a notice of 5 or more business days. Please make arrangements in case an emergency arises.
Cruise into Mursion
We are proud to showcase Mursion at the 2017 Collaborative Beginning Teacher Fall Drive-In Conference on September 30 at East Carolina University. This conference will feature a series of interest sessions highlighting developments and best practices in supporting beginning teachers. The conference is organized by Ralph Evans, Director of The Collaborative, a beginning teacher support system for twelve Northeastern North Carolina School Districts.

During the Mursion sessions, beginning teachers will have the opportunity to start a new unit with the Mursion class or participate in a parent teacher conference. The Mursion team will guide participants in reflecting upon their experience and receiving feedback from their peers.

SEED Grant Proposal Supports Lateral Entry
This summer, the Mursion Team in collaboration with the Rural Education Institute submitted a grant proposal to fund Project BUILD. This proposal was in response to the US Department of Education--Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Program. Project BUILD will combine two College of Education resources, Mursion and Sanford INSPIRE modules along with an instructional coaching model to support lateral entry teachers in Northeast NC School districts. If funded, Project BUILD investigators, Kristen Cuthrell, Christine Wilson, and Holly Fales will work closely with participating Northeast school districts to set up five regional Mursion labs where district instructional coaches can work directly with lateral entry teachers on pedagogical skills, student engagement, classroom management, community engagement and other pertinent skills. Project BUILD investigators will work with participating districts to create an innovative and sustainable lateral entry and beginning teacher support model at the district level and aims to increase teacher retention in high needs areas.

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SIMULATION ENVIRONMENTS

MIDDLE SCHOOL
Originally designed as a teacher training simulator, this virtual environment has also been used to build the interpersonal skills of children with autism spectrum disorder. (New class coming in Spring 2018.)

THE OFFICE
These simulated offices with a female or male avatar can be used for simulations that prepare learners for intense interpersonal interactions.

Example uses include: sales and negotiations, counseling and psychiatry, leadership development, human resources, etc.

CUSTOMER SERVICE
Originally designed as a simulator for hospitality customer service training, this virtual environment includes three individual avatars (two female and one male). It is also used for customer service scenarios outside hospitality, such as banking or retail.

HEALTHCARE
This virtual medical examination room with a single female avatar is used for standardized patient training.

UPPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
The upper elementary students are designed for grades 3-5 by ETS as part of an NSF grant. They have the ability to show their work by using tablets at their desks. (Coming soon.)