Summer has been a busy time for Mursion and wait until you see the impact it will have on you and the way you can use Mursion beginning this semester! We have been working with several new areas of the university partnering with new programs and working on new grant initiatives. We also enjoyed working with teachers back in June at the Educator Excellence Summit, that we plan to repeat again next year.

Now, back to what’s new. First of all, we have been working with the non-profit Advocates for Youth to train teachers across the US with Mursion. This partnership has allowed us to refine the ability to offer you Mursion with your online classes. See the article Mursion Online, for more details on this initiative.

If you haven’t seen Mursion yet, we are happy to do a demonstration for you. Demonstrations can now be done in the lab or online.

As you may know, all of the work done in Mursion is guided by a scenario chosen or developed by the instructor. We have been working to develop a library of scenarios to choose from in a variety of disciplines. I encourage you to look at our current scenarios at https://blog.ecu.edu/sites/mursion/scenarios/, but know that we are still happy to work with you to design additional scenarios that best suit your needs.

If you choose to create a new scenario, we will work with you to run through the scenario before it is done with your students. The test can be done either in the lab or online.

A new application was released in July to make it easier to run Mursion. What this means for you, is that it can be run in the Mursion lab by the faculty member. For those who have been wanting to use it in other places, it can also be used in other buildings as long as there is appropriate hardware (including a non-projection screen), a wired internet connection, and the software can be installed on the computer.

Along with the new application, the avatars that were introduced in the Spring have been improved, and several new environments have been added for hospitality. We are anticipating a new secondary discipline.
The Power of Mursion

1. Practice difficult conversations with real feedback from instructor and peers.
2. Engage in situations that previously were only available once in the workplace, such as child-therapy sessions.
3. Provides a safe space to experiment with difficult situations with no harm befalling the students/clients/etc.
4. Interpersonal communication skills are integral in personal and professional success. Mursion gives the opportunity to practice these skills and an opportunity for reflection and feedback.
5. In teacher preparation, meaningful time teaching a class can be limited. Mursion provides an opportunity to practice specific skills candidates need to focus on.
6. Teacher candidates have full control of the Mursion classroom without the benefit of the students responding to the regular classroom teacher, giving them a more realistic view of what their future classroom will be like.
7. Simulations can be paused and resumed to allow for input throughout the simulation as needed.
8. A variety of environments and avatars are available to make its possibilities limitless: counselling, business, hospitality, education, allied health, foreign languages, student services, human resources, and on and on.
9. Each interaction is targeted on preset objectives to get the most out of brief interactions of 10 minutes or less.
10. Gives students the kind of hands-on real-life experiential learning opportunities that research has shown is desired by employers.

Integrating Mursion in your Course(s)

At ECU, we are pleased to be the only university in the state with a Mursion license and the ability to offer Mursion technology to students across campus. In fact, with our license, we have been able to establish partnerships with K-12 school systems as well as other colleges, universities, and organizations. We have been astounded by the growth we have seen at ECU just since 2016 when we started with Mursion. Currently, there are three grants (almost $2 million) actively using Mursion for funded research and so far, use doubles from the corresponding prior semester across the university. Mursion is here to stay. If you aren’t using it yet, now is the time to find out how.

How much time outside of class will this take?

This depends. Your Mursion sessions can take place during regular class hours or outside of class, but minimally you will need to be present during your students’ Mursion sessions. Each class typically takes part in two sessions through the course of a semester: once mid-semester and again toward the end. The length of a session can vary depending on the content but will range from 5 to 10 minutes. A Mursion session can be scheduled for as little as one hour and as many as eight-hours (in 2 four-hour blocks). When determining the amount of time you will need, you will want to account for transition time between students as well as feedback which may occur during and/or after each student. Also, each hour has 50-minutes of useable time, except for the first hour, which also needs about 10 minutes of setup time. If you choose to use one of the scenarios from our library, you don’t need to do anything beyond selecting the scenario and entering in any comments about specifics when you schedule your session. If you decide to create a custom scenario, there will be additional time needed to develop and test one.

How much time inside of class will this take?

For students to best benefit, they need more than just the experience. It needs to be taken back into the classroom. Before the students enter Mursion for the first time, they should be familiarized with the environment. There are videos at www.ecu.edu/mursion to help. This gives your students an opportunity to meet the class and see a little of their personalities. This should help them to feel a bit more comfortable when they walk into the meeting or class for
Mursion Online

Have you been wanting to use Mursion with your classes but have felt left out because you only teach online? Well there is no longer a reason to let that stop you.

The structure of the online sessions is very similar to that of the traditional sessions in that the faculty member must be present along with the students who will be participating in the Mursion session. Like a traditional session, online sessions can range from 1 to 3 hours. As usual, a typical Mursion hour will allow between 4 and 6 students to participate in Mursion sessions while the others watch and potentially give feedback or take notes.

Keep in mind that while online sessions are a great opportunity when students absolutely cannot make it to campus, there is a reduction in the effectiveness of sessions because the students are not in a disruption-free environment and the avatars are much smaller than they would appear to be in the lab. In the regular lab, you will find that the students often get fully immersed in the simulation, but online that is typically not the case.

The sessions take place through Zoom and can be recorded upon request and put into Mediasite as a block or into VoiceThread as individual sessions that you can then move into your Blackboard course. We have adjusted fall hours to accommodate online classes and opened some evenings up to allow scheduling as late as 8:00 pm.

If you would like to use Mursion online with your classes, you will need to attend a training session to ensure that everything runs smoothly for you. Please email mursion@ecu.edu for information about upcoming training opportunities.

Scheduling an online session is identical as a regular session, simply choose Online through Zoom as the location, just use our scheduler to reserve your session—https://ecumursion.simplybook.me

Schedule today at: http://ecumursion.simplybook.me/
Spring 2019, our interactor will be a full-time position. We will need to fund this position out of Mursion proceeds; with this in mind, we will need to begin charging for Mursion use. Dean Hayes will be covering the expenses for all College of Education use for the foreseeable future except for sessions canceled with less than a week’s notice.

Mursion@ECU is picking up speed. It is now available across ECU and in K-12 schools. Beginning in the fall, we will be reaching out across the UNC system and the public sector.

Mursion@ECU Contact Information
Christine Wilson
wilsonc@ecu.edu
228-1143
225 Speight Building
ecumursion.simplybook.me
mursion@ecu.edu

www.ecu.edu/mursion

What’s New
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Integration
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the first time. You should have your students prepare for their Mursion lesson in much the same way they would for a real-life situation. They should know the background information they would going into any meeting and dress the part. All of the sessions are recorded, and can then be reflected upon individually, by groups, or the class as a whole. This reflection is critical to improvement.

Plan to make Mursion a part of your course

We want you to take this and run with it. Currently, we have developed a bank of scenarios in a variety of areas, and new ones are added regularly, but if you are interested in working with us to create a different one, we are happy to work with you on that. We encourage you to integrate this into your class. There will be several weeks between the students’ first experience and their second. By reflecting on what happened during their first experience, the students should be markedly better prepared and perform much better during their second experience. Mursion could easily lend itself to a project given the potential components of preparation, delivery, observation, and reflection.

Exactly how does this work?

As this is new, it can be a bit overwhelming, and we are indeed here to help. Currently, there are five different categories of environments to make it possible to fit the needs of a variety of areas. For example, the classroom is set up to allow for a classroom scenario environment or a one on one scenario environment.

To view all of them with the avatars, visit http://blog.ecu.edu/sites/mursion/environments/. The sessions are recorded internally using Mediasite, so sessions can be watched from a different room with a delay of only a few minutes, which gives you a couple of options. When a student is in a session, the room can be empty except for you and the student, while the other students are waiting in a different room watching the live session on a screen. Having fewer students in the room can keep distractions down, which can be beneficial since it is a bit more realistic.

You can serve as the facilitator or we can provide one for you, should something go wrong technically. We can also keep an eye out through the live feed from downstairs. Since all sessions are recorded, we do need to ensure that all candidates sign a video release form. If you aren’t familiar with Mursion, we encourage you to schedule a demonstration.

Scheduling

Schedule your Mursion sessions at least a week in advance but as early as possible, since only one Mursion session can occur at any given time.