# Digital Technology and Educational Culture Mini-Track

*Digital Documents and Digital Documents Collaboration Systems and Technology Tracks*

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## Introduction

Digital technologies have significantly impacted the culture of many kinds of educational communities, from kindergartens to post-doctoral environments. These technologies can play an important role whether students are learning in a face-to-face setting or through a distance learning setting. Moreover, an expanded definition of the term educational community has evolved with the emergence of new learning settings made possible by various kinds of distance learning technologies.

The Digital Technology and Education Culture mini-track presents papers that reflect attention to how these technologies function in the new learning environments that have emerged. The papers address the orchestration of MOO activity, technology possibilities in discourse for collaborative knowledge building and the development of interactive learning courseware.

*Learning to Orchestrate MOO Activity,* by Yvonne Waern and Teresa Cerratto, presents a review of case studies involving two groups of teachers struggling with the challenge of learning to work effectively in a synchronous text-based virtual environment. The MOO was a vehicle for class work to further the teachers' professional development.

*Collaborative Representations: Supporting Face-to-Face and Online Knowledge-building Discourse*, by Dan Suthers, emphasizes the need to devote research efforts to explore how digital technologies enable pedagogically sound forms of interactive learning. He focuses on the relationship between discourse and representations, including the effects that alternate knowledge representations have on collaborative learning discourse, and the suitability of alternate discourse representations for online conversations about artifacts.

*Interactive Learning: Design and Evaluation*, by Johanna Klassen, Douglas Vogel and Emily Moody presents a case study of the team development of an interactive coursework package for improving English language skills for students and faculty in higher education. They emphasize the importance of planning and understanding the interaction between the technologies' capabilities and the kind of learning desired.

The mini-track will also present a discussant from the world of independent school education in the United States, Mark Hale, Head of St. Matthew's Episcopal Day School. Mr. Hale will reflect on how educators perceive the advent of the kinds of technologies described in the papers and how the future of education is likely to be intertwined with digital technologies.