Charles Sturt Uni offers distance learning ICT Graduate Certificate

Pick up some graphics skills at Charles Sturt

Charles Sturt University has partnered with Adobe and Microsoft to create a unique series of postgraduate level courses for K–12 teachers who want to be able to develop and deliver engaging, technology-rich learning activities.

The graduate certificate in ICT Education is delivered by distance learning. Course cost is $1520 per subject and several scholarships are available. Fees are tax deductible and the government's Fee–Help scheme may be accessed.

To date, 15 teachers have graduated from the Adobe courses and there are currently 54 teachers enrolled.

Recent course participants are enthusiastic about the Adobe courses and what they have learned.

Tameika Grist said: "I thoroughly enjoyed the course, Marco [Cattaneo] was an outstanding deliverer who went over and above the support you'd normally expect at this level. His feedback was constructive and practical.

"The instructional videos he has made are invaluable and make this course achievable, even for a novice in Adobe. As a busy teacher, the ability to produce high quality resources, materials and advertising for events with InDesign, Illustrator, Acrobat and Publisher has really made a positive impact within my school.

"This course has opened up many new possibilities for me, and shown me the beginnings of what can be created using these programmes."

A teacher in her second year, Pamela Nievas commented: "Completing these units with Marco has given me an edge in using Adobe software effectively within a classroom. I have gained confidence and skills in using certain programmes brought into schools by the digital revolution.

"Now that all students in Year 9 have access to personal learning devices, many teachers are left not knowing how to use some of the programmes. This course is ideal to gain skills in all Adobe software.

"I personally was a bit worried about the amount of work entailed in distance education, but it works in well with a teacher's workload. I am now using any of the work completed in Marco's units as examples when I explain how to use programmes in my classrooms.

"This is only my second year teaching and I was offered a permanent position at my school because of my newly acclaimed knowledge and skills using Adobe software."

Marco Cattaneo

Graduate Certificate in ICT Education

To graduate with the Graduate Certificate in ICT Education, students must satisfactorily complete a minimum of four subjects (or 32 subject points). Students may choose to complete the Adobe subjects and sit the Adobe examination independently.

Core subjects

Two subjects
ITI568 (Adobe) Digital Curriculum I
ITI569 (Adobe) Digital Curriculum II
EMT restricted electives
Students must choose one of:
EMT501 Educational Applications of Information Technology
EMT502 Educational Technology: Theory and Practice
ITC restricted electives
Students must choose one of:
ITC510 Online Communities
ITC577 Information and Communication Technology Fundamentals

The courses are delivered 'virtually' with students attending weekly, after-hours classes via Citrix GoToWebinar. IT Masters assists the university in the delivery of the courses.

Adobe subjects

Adobe Digital Curriculum I covers website development and ongoing maintenance. Students are taught how to use Dreamweaver CS4, Flash CS4 and Fireworks CS4.

Adobe Digital Curriculum II teaches PhotoShop CS4 extended, InDesign CS4, Acrobat 8 Professional, and Illustrator CS4.

Marco Cattaneo is the lecturer delivering the Adobe subjects. He says that students starting out with little or no knowledge of either website or print production should be capable of undertaking quite complex projects by the end of their course.

After registration, students receive the Adobe books and a CD ROM containing the curriculum files. An email follows to announce the course start date and time and to invite them to attend. Access is by username and password.

The weekly online lectures commence at 7.30 pm and conclude at 10.00 pm. A shared screen allows students to ask questions and make comments. Marco Cattaneo can also pass the microphone individually to participants wanting to make a verbal contribution to the discussion. All lectures are recorded and uploaded to the internet forum where they can be accessed for later study.

The lecture series take students step-by-step from elementary to advanced. For example, the website course (Curriculum I) starts with an explanation of Adobe Fireworks and an explanation of file structures. During the lecture, students follow a demonstration of how to create a nameplate. Afterwards, everyone creates and uploads a personal nameplate and during the next session these are discussed and critiqued.

As the lecture series proceeds, students are introduced to the basics of designing a logo, then creating a web page and how to use a wireframe to plan the structure. A storyboard comes next; this covers selection of colours, typefonts and images.

By week six or seven, students are expected to have developed their own, working website. At this point they are given the first of two assignments to test their understanding and capabilities.

Progressively, during the second half of the course, students are introduced to Dreamweaver and HTML, where to find resources and how to use them.

There's a second assignment to complete at the end of 14 weeks, at which point, students should be both confident and competent in the use of the full Adobe suite.

Course details: www.ictteachers.info