For many decades, classrooms, especially elementary classrooms, involved a high level of hands on activity. Teachers were skilled in setting up learning centers where students could explore deeply at their own pace. Sadly, more recent decades have seen a decline in the opportunity for such independent exploration. The emphasis on the need for data, particularly from standardized testing performance, has greatly diminished, if not completely extinguished, the amount of time that can be spared for creative play and exploration. The current makerspace movement is a direct result of a desire to restore play and creativity in the classroom.

A makerspace can take many forms and contain a range of resources, from robotics to craft supplies. In some schools, makerspaces are found in classrooms, while in other schools, they are part of a media center or a learning commons.

In the SCSU School of Education, the Discovery Lab (formerly the Instructional Technology Discovery Lab (ITDL), is evolving into a makerspace featuring robots, circuitry, games, window crayons, Legos, and paper and coloring supplies. At a recent Discovery Lab Open House held at the CTC (curriculum Technology Center) located in the Education Building, students and faculty were able to get some hands on experience with various technologies that fall under the S.T.E.M (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education.

Discovery Lab resources include Dot & Dash, Makeymakey Go!, Ozobots, Brain Teasers, and Osmo kits for interactive iPad gaming. By exploring the resources independently and creatively, innovative ways of incorporating them into learning environments can be developed. The Discovery Lab provides these resources and opportunities for exploration not only for students, but also for faculty and staff professional development. Hopefully, makerspace exploration will return the classrooms of the future to spaces where play and creativity are valued. Next time you are in the School of Education, stop by the Discovery Lab to see what you can create.

“The current makerspace movement is a direct result of a desire to restore play and creativity in the classroom.”

Jessi Berzins
Discovery Lab
Caitlin Hites
Alumni Profile

This issue’s Alumni Corner piece features Caitlin Hites, a recent graduate of the Instructional Design & Training master’s program, with a great story to tell. Caitlin spent a lot of time at SCSU. She completed her undergraduate degree here as well as her—not one, but two—graduate degrees. Despite her mother’s (Jeanne Anderson) involvement with the Information Media department, Caitlin admits that she wasn’t sold on web-based education originally. “I heard things. I heard people say that it was really easy or really hard. I was looking for some technology skills, so I decided to sign up for an online IM class. I was surprised by how well it worked. My classes were online and my professor wasn’t even in the same state, but I felt like she was right there with us.” After that experience, Caitlin was hooked. While studying for those two master’s degrees, Caitlin was a member of the Academic Technologies Team. As a member of the team, she used her IM experience and education to help professors with online quality standards, create edifying modules, and design game-based learning. Some of her online, self-paced, English courses are still available at the School of Graduate studies.

Many people know someone who had to be an intern. Internships can open doors or they can delay dreams. Some might have heard of interns who spent much of their retrieving coffee. It is safe to say that Caitlin didn’t spend her time delivery coffee. Caitlin’s experience and education got her a ticket into the magic kingdom, a.k.a. Disney World in Orlando, Florida. While at Disney, Caitlin worked as an intern with the instructional design staff. She’s got a lot of memories about the experience, but her favorite is a game she created. “I still get thank-you notes from people in that class” she says. “They loved that crossword puzzle,” demonstrating that sometimes the simplest design is still the best.

Caitlin is now a training coordinator and instructional designer at the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire. She’s currently focusing most of her energy on training coordination and logistics. “I basically operate the training center” she states. On any given day, one can find Caitlin creating work schedules, troubleshooting issues, managing student trainers, adjusting payroll, designing websites, and training new hires. “I really like my job” she says. “I could see myself being director some day.” Keeping shooting for those stars, Caitlin. You’re definitely one of them from this department.

Andrew Dahlberg
Student Worker, CTC

I am from St. Cloud, Minnesota, but I was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado. I have one brother and over twelve half siblings. As a CTC worker, I check materials in and out, shelve supplies, and help folks find what they are looking for and show them how to make use of the resources in the CTC. My education at SCSU has prepared me to work in this position by teaching me generally accepted accounting practices and how to apply them in business management. I enjoy managing finances for businesses and analyzing financial reports to help me make decisions about managing a business.

I like football, enjoying the great outdoors, and am a pretty good chess player. I’ve been to a handful of states and the only other country I’ve been to is Canada. The people who have influenced me the most are my mother, my uncles, David Weinstein, Andrew Carnegie, Sam Walton, Evan Spiegel, and Will Allen. My favorite topics are Biographies, documentaries, business, politics, and football. Thank you.

Yewon Sung
Graduate Assistant, IM

Hello! I am Yewon Sung and the newest graduate assistant in Information Media. I am from Seoul, South Korea, which is about 6,200 miles away from Saint Cloud. I moved from Korea to United States to enter SCSU fall semester in 2015. There were big challenges starting this new academic path including being separated from my family. My family consists of my father, mother, older brother, sister-in-law, a niece, my husband and me. My father and mother influenced me a lot by encouraging and supporting my life goals in education. Thus, I respect my parents a lot. I have been married since last summer. My husband is a first Lieutenant in the Korean military. Even though we live far from each other now, we hope to live together after completing his mandatory period of service.

I started to work as a Graduate Assistant in the department of Information Media, spring semester in 2016. I administer the Computer Competency Test, assist with the School of Education Newsletter, and also help out in the Curriculum and Technology Center. I do appreciate this opportunity which enables me to know more about a working atmosphere in United States. My majors are special education and curriculum and instruction, which have helped me to communicate with students and faculty in School of Education. My previous working experience was as an elementary school teacher, which helped me to understand the information media area. When I taught students in my classroom, I usually used multimedia to help with student comprehension.

One of my hobbies is to learn about new cultures. The first step to learning is visiting and meeting the people. When I was a university student, I studied abroad as an exchange student in Japan. I have been to various countries including India, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Japan, China, in addition to the United States. My husband and I visited the Grand Canyon between fall and spring semesters. I really love Minnesota and I want to learn more about the United States.
As noted in the fall 2015 issue of this newsletter, Lisa Gearman, who earned licensure and her MS in Information Media from St. Cloud State University, has been honored as the Media Specialist of the Year by the Information and Technology Educators of Minnesota (ITEM). Lisa is an educator who has worked in the Eastern Carver County School District for 23 years: 18 years as an English teacher, and then the past five years as a media specialist.

Teaching and learning are a passion for Lisa. A lifelong learner, Lisa readily admits that she loves to take classes. This love of learning is reflected in her current job title: Information Innovation Learning Specialist (IILS). In this role, Lisa curates 21st century digital information in a way that helps bridge the gap between the students and staff and the overwhelming amount of information that is available to them. To be innovative allows Lisa to rethink, reinvent, and reimagine ways school libraries could look in the future, especially their role in transforming learning to facilitate each student’s individual learning style.

One of Lisa’s initiatives is finding ways to assist students in developing a positive digital presence that goes beyond the four walls of a classroom. To do this, she specifically uses social media, Skype and other digital tools. In addition to digital experiences, the students gain skills in problem solving and learning independently. To further encourage exploration and utilization of the digital world, Lisa is organizing the Chaska High School Media Center for its very own “sandbox,” where students will experiment with personalized and flexible learning spaces.

The opportunities for creative learning are as boundless as Lisa’s enthusiasm and energy for implementing them. Kudos to you, Lisa, for all that you do, and for being such a stellar representative of the Information Media department and the evolving role of the media specialist.

Scholarships 2016

We proudly announce the scholarship recipients for the 2016-17 academic year. Through the generosity of alumni, friends and faculty of the department we were able to award $9950 in scholarships to deserving students. The scholarships and recipients are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholarship</th>
<th>Recipient(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Luther Brown</td>
<td>Davidson Blanchard and Dustee Phenow</td>
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<td>Dennis and Anne Fields</td>
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<td>Bonnie Hedin</td>
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<td>Carl and Marilyn Savage</td>
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<td>Mert and Marcia Thompson</td>
<td>Alex Voigt</td>
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</table>

The donors and recipients of these scholarships will be celebrated at the fall 2016 Dessert Fest.
The theme for this issue of the IM Newsletter is “Learning and Engagement.” Few would argue that much learning can be accomplished without the engagement of the students. But what is engagement and how do we bring it about? Some random thoughts.

Student engagement is defined as investment or commitment by Marks (2000) or effortful involvement in the learning by Reschly and Christenson (2012). But it is a vague concept at best. How is engagement measured? The most commonly used tools appear to be self reporting and observation, both of which have major limitations. If students are self reporting, in addition to pressure from the teacher or others to indicate that they were fully engaged, there is also the issue of the limited ability to accurately judge our own engagement. Right now I believe I am engaged in writing this short piece, but when I pause to consider the next sentence and glance out the window I notice a piece of something shiny blowing in the grass. Because the mind can process information faster than others can speak, we have a tendency to wander mentally. Who has not had the experience of thinking they were completely engaged in a conversation or event only to discover that they missed something such as when being asked a direct question. The other tool, the use of trained observers to watch for engagement, also has limitations. Unless the engagement being observed results in some type of overt behavior, such as manipulating objects, observers are often not able to determine if the brain activity is focused on the task at hand or something else.

When my daughters were young, I was impressed by how much they learned in their first year of life. At birth they could do or control were very limited: they could cry, sleep, take in nourishment and eliminate waste. One year later I could not begin to list all of the things they could do and control. The amount of learning that takes place in that first year is never duplicated again in a lifetime. Are they engaged in their learning? I would argue that if they are awake, they are engaged; constantly observing, mimicking, experimenting. Why is it that in formal education and training environments we often struggle to keep people engaged when it is so natural early in our lives?

Our formal educational system and business training departments have moved away from the idea of play. We have become focused on tangible results, often measured through standardized tests. We have even eliminated recess from some school schedules to allow more time for direct instruction and testing. Yet play and the engagement that results from it are exactly how much learning in our early years of life is accomplished.

What can you do to help the people you work with become more engaged in their learning?


• Day-long workshops.
• Renew, rejuvenate and grow your professional expertise.
• Sessions may be used for CEUs.

St. Cloud State University is committed to legal affirmative action, equal opportunity, access and diversity in its campus community. http://scsu.mn/EOA
## IM Graduate Course Offering Plan*

**2015 - 2018**

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*This plan is subject to change upon student demand and available resources

### Information Media

#### Summer Session

**Summer Session I**  
**May 16- June 23**

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<th>IM Class</th>
<th>Sec</th>
<th>Course ID</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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*This plan is subject to change upon student demand and available resources*
### Summer Session II
#### June 27 - August 4

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### Information Media
#### Fall Schedule 2016

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<td>MC B17</td>
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<td>504</td>
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### Undergraduate/Graduate Classes

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<td>5:00 – 7:30</td>
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### Graduate Only Classes

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<td>620</td>
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<td>School Library Media Program Course meets through distance technology. Synchronous meetings required.</td>
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<td>Training/Human Resource Development Course meets through distance technology. Synchronous meetings required.</td>
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<td>Computer-based Authoring Course meets through distance technology. Synchronous meetings required.</td>
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### Practicum/Internship

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<td>Thompson, Ma</td>
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<td>5:00-9:45</td>
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**IM & CTC Social Media**

- **IM Facebook**: [https://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group_326983293392&ap=1](https://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group_326983293392&ap=1)
- **IM Twitter**: [https://twitter.com/IM_SCSU](https://twitter.com/IM_SCSU)
# Information Media
### Spring Schedule 2017

## Graduate Only Classes

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<td>001863</td>
<td>Developing Skills for Online Teaching and Learning</td>
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<td>Research Methods in Media Teaching</td>
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<td>Technology in the Workplace</td>
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<td>Reading, Listening, Viewing Guidance and Selection of Resources for Young Adults</td>
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## Practicum/Internship

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<td>Library Media Specialist Practicum</td>
<td>Thompson, Me</td>
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## Faculty Contact Information

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information Media Office</td>
<td>EB B118</td>
<td>(320) 308-2062</td>
<td><a href="mailto:im@stcloudstate.edu">im@stcloudstate.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chair:</strong> Mert Thompson</td>
<td>EB A142</td>
<td>(320) 308-4775</td>
<td><a href="mailto:methompson@stcloudstate.edu">methompson@stcloudstate.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanne Anderson</td>
<td>EB A143</td>
<td>(320) 308-4823</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jeanne@stcloudstate.edu">jeanne@stcloudstate.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristen Carlson</td>
<td>EB A141</td>
<td>(320) 308-5375</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kmcarlson@stcloudstate.edu">kmcarlson@stcloudstate.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yun Jeong Park</td>
<td>EB A150</td>
<td>(320) 308-3549</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ypark@stcloudstate.edu">ypark@stcloudstate.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcia Thompson</td>
<td>EB A144</td>
<td>(320) 308-2120</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mthompson@stcloudstate.edu">mthompson@stcloudstate.edu</a></td>
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### Staff/GA Information

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<td><strong>Staff</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kimberly Rose</td>
<td>EB B118</td>
<td>(320) 308-2062</td>
<td><a href="mailto:karose@stcloudstate.edu">karose@stcloudstate.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate Assistants</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tiffany Miley</td>
<td>EB A127</td>
<td>(320) 308-3832</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ctc@stcloudstate.edu">ctc@stcloudstate.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Kapfhammer</td>
<td>EB A120D</td>
<td>(320) 308-4193</td>
<td><a href="mailto:imga5@stcloudstate.edu">imga5@stcloudstate.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melanie Howe</td>
<td>EB A120D</td>
<td>(320) 308-4193</td>
<td><a href="mailto:imga1@stcloudstate.edu">imga1@stcloudstate.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yewon Sung</td>
<td>EB A120D</td>
<td>(320) 308-4193</td>
<td><a href="mailto:imga3@stcloudstate.edu">imga3@stcloudstate.edu</a></td>
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</table>

The Information Media Department faculty and staff welcome news of events, issues, and current and former students. To forward news items or change of address information, please contact:

Information Media Department
Education Building, Room B118
St. Cloud State University
720 4th Avenue South
St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498
Telephone: 1-320-308-2062
e-mail: imga4@stcloudstate.edu
http://www.stcloudstate.edu/im/

Information Media News is published semi-annually by the Information Media Department, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498.
The opinions expressed within this newsletter reflect official positions of neither SCSU administrators nor faculty. Newsletter staff would like to thank each individual who contributed to this publication.

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- Yewon Sung, imga3@stcloudstate.edu,
- Melanie Howe, imga1@stcloudstate.edu, and
- Robert Kapfhammer, imga5@stcloudstate.edu;
- Dr. Merton Thompson, Faculty Advisor, e-mail: methompson@stcloudstate.edu