Textbooks Used in Graduate Programs in Instructional Design and Technology: Changes Over the Past Twelve Years

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Over the years, there have been numerous attempts to identify the key pieces of literature in the field of instructional design and technology.[1] Researchers have attempted to identify the most frequently cited authors and articles (Braden, 1981; Braden & Sachs, 1983; Sachs, 1991, 1993; Sachs & Braden, 1984), have conducted analyses of citation patterns (Braden & Sachs, 1983; Sachs & Braden, 1984), and have surveyed individuals in the field in order to identify what they consider to be the most influential journals and most important journal articles (Moore & Braden, 1988).

Another attempt to identify the key literature has involved examining the most frequently used textbooks in the field. These efforts have typically involved conducting surveys of faculty members and/or practitioners in the field in order to identify what textbooks they use in their classes and/or in their daily work. Starting in the early 1980s and continuing into the early 1990s, a series of such surveys was conducted by Roberts Braden and Steve Sachs (Braden & Sachs, 1983; Sachs & Braden, 1984; Sachs, 1991). The last in this series of surveys (Sachs, 1993) was conducted during the 1991–1992 academic year. Results from that survey, listing the textbooks most frequently used in academic programs, are presented in Table 1.[2]

It has now been a dozen years since the aforementioned survey was conducted. During that time there have been major changes in the field of instructional design and technology. Interest in such areas as performance improvement, constructivism, e-learning, knowledge management systems, digital media, and learning objects have had a direct impact on the nature of our field. In light of these changes, what textbooks are now being used most frequently to educate students enrolled in academic programs in instructional design and technology? Are the textbooks that are most popular today the same textbooks (or newer editions of the same textbooks) that were popular a dozen years ago, when the last textbook survey was conducted? If so, have the topics covered in these books substantially changed? In what ways? If new textbooks are now popular, how do the topics covered in these volumes differ from those topics covered in the textbooks that were popular twelve years ago? The purpose of this study was to answer these questions.

Method

Participants

In order to determine which textbooks are being used to teach students enrolled in academic programs in the field of instructional design and technology, we decided to conduct a survey of the faculty members teaching in those programs. We limited our efforts to programs in the United States and in Canada. In order

[1] In accordance with Reiser (2002), we view the field of instructional design and technology as encompassing "the analysis of learning and performance problems, and the design, development, implementation, evaluation and management of instructional and non-instructional processes and resources intended to improve learning and performance in a variety of settings, particularly educational institutions and the workplace....Research and theory related to each of the aforementioned areas is also an important part of the field" (p. 12).

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[2] The table lists the 19 most frequently required books in the 1991–1992 survey. Twenty additional books, each of which were required by two academic programs, were tied for the twentieth position. To receive a list of these twenty books, contact the first author at: *reiser@coe.fsu.edu*

Table 1

Most Frequently Required Textbooks: 1991–1992 Survey Results

Textbook	Number of Programs in Which Book Was a Course Requirement (n = 76)
Dick, W., & Carey, L. (1990). *The systematic design of instruction* (3rd ed.).	32
Gagné, R. M., Briggs, L. J., & Wager, W. W. (1988). *Principles of instructional design* (3rd ed.).	17
Heinich, R., Molenda, M., & Russell, J. D. (1989). *Instructional media and the new technologies of instruction* (3rd ed.).	17
Kemp, J., & Smellie, D. (1989). *Planning, producing, and using instructional media* (6th ed.).	10
Seels, B., & Glasgow, Z. (1990). *Exercises in instructional design.*	8
Hannafin, M. J., & Peck, K. L. (1988). *The design, development, and evaluation of instructional software.*	7
Gagné, R. M. (1987). *Instructional technology: Foundations.*	6
Rossett, A. (1987). *Training needs assessment.*	6
Kemp, J. (1985). *The instructional design process.*	5
Anglin, G. (1991). *Instructional technology: Past, present, and future.*	4

Table 1 (continued)

Most Frequently Required Textbooks: 1991–1992 Survey Results

Textbook	Number of Programs in Which Book Was a Course Requirement (n = 76)
Briggs, L. J., Gustafson, K. L., & Tillman, M. H. (1991). *Instructional design: Principles and applications* (2nd ed.).	4
Bergman, R. E., & Moore, T. V. (1990). *Managing interactive video/multimedia projects.*	3
Gagné, R. M., & Driscoll, M. P. (1988). *Essentials of learning for instruction* (2nd ed.).	3
Jonassen, D. H. (1988). *Instructional designs for microcomputer courseware.*	3
Reigeluth, C. M. (1983). *Instructional design theories and models: An overview of their current status.*	3
Romiszowski, A. J. (1981). *Designing instructional systems: Decision making in course planning and curriculum design.*	3
Saettler, P. (1990). *The evolution of American educational technology.*	3
Simonson, M. R., & Thompson, A. (1990). *Educational computing foundations.*	3
Turner, P. M. (1985). *Helping teachers teach: A school library media specialist's role.*	3

to identify the programs in the United States, we used the list of programs that appeared in the 2003 edition of the *Educational Media and Technology Yearbook* (Fitzgerald, Orey, & Branch, 2003). Each year the editors of the *Yearbook* attempt to contact the program representatives of the graduate programs in "instructional technology, educational media communications, school library media, and closely allied programs in the

United States" (Burdett, 2003, p. 365), and ask them to provide updated information about their programs.[3]

In late February, 2004, we sent out a survey (described below) to the program representatives of all of the 147 programs listed in the 2003 *Yearbook*, plus two programs in Canada, asking them to distribute copies of the survey to the members of their faculty who, in turn, were requested to complete the survey and return it to us electronically. Over the next several months, we sent out the same survey three more times, in most cases sending it to the representatives of those programs in which few or none of the faculty had responded. During the final distribution of the survey (which took place in May, 2004), in some cases, rather than sending the survey to the program representative, we sent copies directly to all of the individual faculty members in that program.

Eventually we received responses from 177 faculty, at 64 programs (43% of the programs we originally contacted). A list of the programs from which we received responses appears in Appendix A.

The Survey Instrument

The survey that we distributed was a single-page document designed to be filled out by individual faculty members. A short introductory paragraph informed faculty that the purpose of the survey was to share information across programs regarding the textbooks used in courses in the field of instructional design and technology. Directions in the subsequent paragraph asked the faculty member to list, by course title, each of the courses he or she had taught/would be teaching during the 2003–2004 academic year and to list all the required and recommended (two separate listings) textbooks used in each course. In addition, the faculty member was asked to list his/her name, the name of his/her university, and some other contact information, and was requested to send the form to us electronically.

[3]An examination of the program information in the *Yearbook* indicates that at least 60 programs (50 of which did not respond to our survey) appear to focus primarily on preparing students for careers in educational leadership, information studies, or school library media. We will leave it up to our readers to determine whether such programs should be considered part of the field of instructional design and technology, as defined in this article. It should also be noted that graduate programs whose primary focus is the learning sciences were not listed in the *Yearbook* and thus were not included in this survey. In light of the relationship between the learning sciences and the field of instructional design and technology (cf. Carr-Chellman & Hoadley, 2004), it would be instructive to conduct another survey comparing the books required in programs whose primary focus is one or the other of these two fields.

Results

The 177 faculty from 64 universities who participated in this survey identified a total of more than 360 different books that they required[4] in the 532 individual courses that they taught during the 2003–2004 academic year. There are a variety of ways one can examine this data in order to get a picture of how frequently the various books are used. Each picture will vary depending upon the chosen unit of analysis. For example, if two faculty members in the same academic program use the same textbook to teach two different sections of the same course, then the frequency of use at that institution would be different, depending upon whether we used the number of faculty members (two) or the number of courses (one) as our unit of analysis. A similar problem arises if two faculty members in the same institution use the same book in two different courses (or in the same course whose title was listed differently on the two faculty members' surveys). In such a case, the recorded frequency with which that book was used would depend on whether the unit of analysis was the number of faculty members using the book (two), the number of courses in which the book was required (two), or the number of academic programs that offered courses in which the book was a requirement (one).

In light of the above, we decided to use as our unit of analysis the number of academic programs in which a particular textbook was required. We chose to do so for two reasons. First, in order to overcome the problems of inflated frequencies described above (e.g., two faculty members at the same institution using the same textbook to teach the same course) and, second, so as to use the same frequency measure that was used in the most recently published study of textbook use (Sachs, 1993). Table 2 lists the textbooks that, during the 2003–2004 academic year, were required in at least one course in five or more academic programs.[5]

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify the textbooks that are currently used most frequently to educate students enrolled in academic programs in the field of instructional design and technology, to compare them to the books that were popular twelve

[4]Inasmuch as only a small percentage of the respondents listed any recommended (as opposed to required) textbooks for the specific courses that they taught, in this article we will limit our discussion to those textbooks that were identified as *required*.

[5]As with Table 1, we have attempted to list the 20 most frequently required textbooks. In this case, five textbooks were tied for positions 19–23.

Table 2

Most Frequently Required Textbooks: 2003–2004 Survey Results

Textbook	Number of Programs in Which Book Was a Course Requirement (n = 64)
Dick, W., Carey, L., & Carey, J. O. (2001). *The systematic design of instruction* (5th ed.).	16
Reiser, R. A., & Dempsey, J. V. (2002). *Trends and issues in instructional design and technology.*	16
Heinich, R., Molenda, M., Russell, J. D., & Smaldino, S. E. (2002). *Instructional media and technologies for learning* (7th ed.).	15
Ertmer, P. A., & Quinn, J. (2003). *The ID casebook: Case studies in instructional design* (2nd ed.).	14
Driscoll, M. P. (2000). *Psychology of learning for instruction* (2nd ed.).	12
Roblyer, M. D. (2003). *Integrating educational technology into teaching* (3rd ed.).	10
Smith, P. L., & Ragan, T. J. (1999). *Instructional design* (2nd ed.).	10
Morrison, G. R., Ross, S. M., & Kemp, J. E. (2001). *Designing effective instruction* (3rd ed.).	9
Alessi, S. M., & Trollip, S. R. (2001). *Multimedia for learning: Methods and development* (3rd ed.).	8
Simonson, M., Smaldino, S., Albright, M., & Zvacek. S. (2003). *Teaching and learning at a distance: Foundations of distance education* (2nd ed.).	8

Table 2 (continued)

Most Frequently Required Textbooks: 2003–2004 Survey Results

Textbook	Number of Programs in Which Book Was a Course Requirement (n = 64)
Clark, R. C., & Mayer, R. E. (2003). *E-learning and the science of instruction: Proven guidelines for consumers and designers of multimedia learning.*	7
Stolovitch, H. D., & Keeps, E. J. (1999). *Handbook of human performance technology: Improving individual and organizational performance worldwide* (2nd ed.).	7
Foshay, W. R., Silber, K. H., & Stelnicki, M. B. (2003). *Writing training materials that work: How to train anyone to do anything.*	6
Gustafson, K. L., & Branch, R. M. (2002). *Survey of instructional development models* (4th ed.).	6
Mager, R., & Pipe, P. (1997). *Analyzing performance problems, or, you really oughta wanna* (3rd ed.).	6
Reigeluth, C. (1999). *Instructional-design theories and models, Volume II: A new paradigm of instructional theory.*	6
Lohr, L. L. (2003) *Creating graphics for learning and performance: Lessons in visual literacy.*	6
Grabe, M. & Grabe, C. (2001). *Integrating technology for meaningful learning* (3rd ed.).	6
Jonassen, D. H. (2001). *Handbook of research for educational communications and technology.*	5

Table 2 (continued)

Most Frequently Required Textbooks: 2003–2004 Survey Results

Textbook	Number of Programs in Which Book Was a Course Requirement (n = 64)
Seels, B. B., & Richey, R. C. (1994) *Instructional technology: The definition and domains of the field.*	5
Block, P. (2000). *Flawless consulting: A guide to getting your expertise used* (2nd ed).	5
Jonassen, D. H., Howland, J., Moore, J., & Marra, R. M. (2003). *Learning to solve problems with technology: A constructivist perspective* (2nd ed).	5
Van Tiem, D. M., Moseley, J. L., & Dessinger, J. C. (2000). *Fundamentals of performance technology: A guide to improving people, process, and performance.*	5

years ago, and to determine how the topics addressed in the currently popular books differ from those that were addressed in the textbooks that were popular in the early 1990s, when the last survey of a similar nature was conducted. The discussion that follows addresses these issues.

We will begin by comparing the two books that appeared on both surveys.[6] Those two are:

- *The Systematic Design of Instruction* (Dick & Carey, 1990; Dick, Carey, & Carey, 2001)
- *Instructional Media and Technologies for Learning* (Heinich, Molenda, & Russell, 1989; Heinich, Molenda, Russell, & Smaldino, 2002)

Although the titles of both of these books remained essentially the same over the twelve-year period separating the two surveys, several new editions of each book appeared during that period and, more importantly, the content of each book changed. For example, the fifth edition of *The Systematic Design of Instruction* (Dick *et al.*, 2001) differs from the third edition (Dick & Carey, 1990) in several key ways; among the most important being an increased emphasis on (a) the needs assessment process as a crucial precursor to identifying instructional goals, and (b) analyzing the instructional context and 'real world' setting where skills will be applied and trying to arrange the former to simulate the latter so as to facilitate transfer of learning. These changes clearly reflect the influence of the performance technology movement, which has emphasized the importance of the analysis phase of the problem-solution process. Moreover, the attempt to arrange conditions in the instructional setting as so to closely match those in the 'real world' is much in line with constructivist pedagogy.

As is the case with the aforementioned text, over the years the authors of what is now called *Instructional Media and Technologies for Learning* have continued to update their book in light of new technological developments in the field. As one of the authors has pointed out (Russell, personal communication, April, 2005), as each new edition has been published, new and emerging technologies have been added, and techniques and discussion of devices that are no longer being used in a majority of schools have been removed from the text. As a result the seventh edition (Heinich *et al.*, 2002) is substantially different from the third edition (Heinich *et al.*, 1989).

As previously indicated, the two aforementioned books were the only ones that appeared on both surveys. How did we go about comparing the books that appeared on only one of the two surveys? We did so by classifying them according to the broad topic area each book addressed. Most of the books were classified into one of the following four broad areas: (a) the instructional design process and how to apply it; (b) media production and utilization; (c) trends and issues; and (d) theories of learning and instruction. While these broad areas were focused upon in some of the books in each survey, the books discussing them were usually different across the two surveys. More importantly, the specific topics addressed in these books often differed across surveys. We shall identify these topical differences by comparing the content of the books within each of the four aforementioned broad areas.

The Instructional Design Process and How to Apply It

As was the case in the 1991–1992 survey, *The Systematic Design of Instruction* (Dick & Carey, 1990; Dick *et al.*, 2001) was identified as the most frequently used "how to do instructional design" text in 2003–2004. However, the other textbooks in this category that appeared in the 2003–2004 survey are different than those that were frequently used a dozen years

[6]Throughout the remainder of this article, we will use the term "books that appear on the first [or second] survey" to mean the books that were identified most frequently in a particular survey.

earlier. Whereas the books by Gagné, Briggs, and Wager (1988), Seels and Glasgow (1990), Kemp (1985), Briggs, Gustafson, and Tillman (1991), and Romisowski (1981) were runners-up to the Dick and Carey (1990) text in 1991–1992, during the 2003–2004 academic year, the texts by Ertmer and Quinn (2003), Smith and Ragan (1999), Morrison, Ross, and Kemp (2001), and Foshay, Silber, and Stelnicki (2003) now are among the most frequently used instructional design texts. An examination of these two sets of books reveals that, as compared to the books that appeared on the 1991–1992 survey, the instructional design texts on the more recent survey address a broader range of skills that instructional designers must possess. For example, the newer texts discuss such issues as project management, the implementation and diffusion of instructional interventions, and how to work as a member of an instructional design team.

The newer instructional design texts also discuss a broader range of instructional approaches. For example, Smith and Ragan (1999) place a great deal of emphasis on generative instructional strategies, that is, strategies in which learners are encouraged to generate their own learning goals, elaboration schemes, memory devices, and so on. This approach reflects the influence of constructivism, and the affordances provided by some of the newer media, which have allowed for the creation of learning environments in which learners have a great deal of instructional control.

Media Production and Utilization

How to use produce media and utilize media in classrooms is another topic that has remained the primary focus of several textbooks on each of the two surveys (Alessi & Trollip, 2001; Grabe & Grabe, 2001; Heinich *et al.*, 1989; Heinich *et al.*, 2002; Kemp & Smellie, 1989; Roblyer, 2003; Turner, 1985). However, as would be expected, the media focused upon in the textbooks on the current survey are quite different than those that were focused upon in the books that appeared on the 1991–1992 survey. For example, in the 1989 edition of their book, Kemp and Smellie devote six chapters on production techniques for each of the following "older" media: print, overhead transparencies, audiotape recordings, slides and filmstrips, multi-image presentations (two or more pictures presented simultaneously), and videotapes, whereas they devote one chapter on newer interactive media (primarily computer-based media). In contrast, Heinich *et al.* (2002) devote three chapters to the older media (visuals, audio, and video) and spend four chapters on newer media, such as computers, hypermedia, virtual reality, the Internet, and other recent means of delivering instruction at a distance, such as video teleconferencing.

Moreover, whereas the earlier media texts often viewed media as serving an instructional role that was supplemental to that of the teacher (e.g., Turner, 1985), the texts in the more recent survey devote significantly more attention to the idea that media other than the teacher can often be used as the primary means of instruction. For example, Heinich *et al.* (2002) discuss situations where the Internet, rather than the teacher, can be the primary instructional medium. Moreover, in contrast to earlier media texts, this volume devotes more attention to alternative instructional methods that are presented via media other than the teacher, such as computer-supported collaborative learning and using simulations for problem-based learning.

Trends and Issues

Three of the books identified in the 1991–1992 survey focused on historical roots and recent trends in the field (Anglin, 1991; Gagné, 1987; Saettler, 1990). Several of the books in the current survey (Gustafson & Branch, 2002; Reiser & Dempsey, 2002; Seels & Richey, 1994) focus on similar issues but, as would be expected, many of the trends that are currently focused upon are quite different than those discussed in the earlier volumes. For example, chapters in the book by Reiser and Dempsey address topics such as electronic performance support, e-learning, and knowledge management. Given that these trends gained prominence in the mid-1990s or later, it is not surprising that the trends books identified in the 1991–1992 survey did not address these issues. Moreover, it is interesting to note that two of the aforementioned innovations (knowledge management and electronic performance support) are often used as non-instructional solutions to performance problems, which is one of the major emphases of the performance technology movement, a movement that has flourished during the twelve years between the two book surveys. Indeed, performance technology is the primary focus of two of the most frequently used textbooks in the current survey (Stolovich & Keeps, 1999; Van Tiem, Moseley, & Dessinger, 2000).

Theories of Learning and Instruction

Many of the principles discussed in the most frequently used books on the instructional design process have been derived from various theories of learning and instruction. The most frequently used book on theories of learning that appeared in the 1991–1992 survey was *Theories of Learning for Instruction* (Gagné & Driscoll, 1988), and in the current survey the most frequently used book on this topic was *Psychology of Learning for Instruction* (Driscoll, 2000). A quick perusal of the chapters in these two books points to the differences in the focus of the two volumes. The Gagné and Driscoll book focuses almost exclusively on cognitive information processing theory, whereas the more recent book by Driscoll covers this theory and a wide range of others, including schema

theory, situated cognition, and constructivism. These differences are reflective of the growing influence a wide variety of theories of learning are having on instructional design practices in our field.

In the area of instructional theories, the first volume of *Instructional Design Theories and Models* (Reigeluth, 1983) was among the most frequently mentioned books on the first survey, whereas the second volume of this work, which was published sixteen years later (Reigeluth, 1999), was among the most frequently cited on the second survey. A comparison of the material covered in these two volumes clearly points to some of the changes that have taken place in the field over that period of time. For example, as the editor of these two volumes has pointed out (Reigeluth, personal communication, April, 2005), compared to the theories and models in the first volume, those discussed in the second are more learner-centered, tend to focus on higher levels of learning outcomes, are more likely to take advantage of the instructional affordances provided by the newer instructional media, and have a good deal of overlap with constructivist thinking. These differences point to the influence that technological advances and constructivism have had on the field. Further evidence of the increasing prominence of constructivist thinking in the literature is the fact that constructivist pedagogy is the primary focus of one of the books on the 2003–2004 survey (Jonassen, Howland, Moore, & Marra, 2003), whereas none of the books on the 1991–1992 survey focused on this topic.

Other Recent Trends

What other trends in the instructional technology field are evident by comparing the most frequently used books in the two surveys? One such trend is the rapidly increasing interest in distance learning, particularly the delivery of instruction via the Internet. This trend is reflected in two of the most frequently used books in the current survey, one that addresses all types of distance learning (Simonson, Smaldino, Albright, & Zyacek, 2003), and one that focuses on selecting, designing, and developing e-learning courses (Clark & Mayer, 2003).

Another trend in recent years has been the outsourcing of instructional design and performance improvement projects. With increasing frequency, rather than having in-house teams design a solution to a performance problem, organizations have been turning to consulting firms to do the work. This trend is reflected by examining the results of the two surveys. One of the most frequently used books in the current survey primarily focuses on consulting (Block, 2000), whereas no book with a similar focus was listed by respondents to the previous survey.

Finally, although research has long been an important part of the field, none of the frequently used textbooks in the previous survey primarily focused on research. In contrast, in the current survey, the second edition of the *Handbook of Research on Educational Communications and Technology* (Jonassen, 2001), is among the most frequently used texts. The breadth of this work clearly points to the wide variety of research topics that professionals in the field have pursued in recent years.

Summary and Conclusion

In conclusion, a comparison of the books that appear on one or both of the two surveys indicates that the topics addressed in these books have expanded during the past twelve years. The major new topics that are frequently addressed include (a) constructivism and related theories of learning of learning and instruction that have affected the field in recent years, (b) the newer media that are often employed in the delivery of instruction, and (c) the concepts and practices often associated with the performance technology movement. A brief summary of how the results of this study point to these changes is presented below.

In recent years, the theory base of the field has expanded, with constructivist views of learning and instruction, and associated notions such as learner-centered instruction, problem-based learning, and situated cognition, being written about with increasing frequency in leading texts in the field. These notions have also had an impact on the instructional design models presented in the most popular textbooks, with several of these texts devoting entire chapters or portions of chapters to ideas derived from constructivist theory.

With regard to media, an examination of the leading texts in the field points to the influence that computers and the Internet have had on the delivery of instruction. Two of the most popular books on the recent survey are devoted exclusively to designing distance learning courses, and several others devote whole chapters or portions of chapters to such topics as distance learning, e-learning, and computer-supported collaborative learning.

The influence the performance technology movement has had on the field is also apparent by examining the recent survey results. Two of the textbooks on the survey focus exclusively on this topic, and a third devotes several chapters to performance technology and non-instructional solutions to performance problems.

Most of us who have been in the field of instructional design and technology for several (or many!) years are well aware of the fact that in the past dozen years the trends described above have had a significant impact on professional practices. It is important that those students who will soon be entering the profession be made aware of those trends and how they have influenced practices in our field. The results of the current survey, when compared to those

obtained from the previous survey, indicate that as practices in our profession have evolved, so have the topics covered in the field's leading textbooks. Thus, the students studying these textbooks are likely to be knowledgeable about the major trends in our field. We expect that this knowledge will serve them well when they become practicing professionals. Moreover, we anticipate that the new professional practices some of these individuals will engage in, and the new ideas they generate, will be major topics in the next generation of popular textbooks in our field. □

Appendix A

Programs that Responded to the Survey

Arizona State University	State University of West Georgia
Boise State University	Syracuse University
Brigham Young University	Temple University
California State University–San Bernardino	Texas Tech University
Clarke College	Towson State University
Concordia University	University of Central Florida
East Carolina University	University of Colorado at Denver
Eastern Michigan University	University of Connecticut
Fairfield University	University of Florida
Florida State University	University of Georgia
George Mason University	University of Louisville
George Washington University	University of Memphis
Georgia Southern University	University of Missouri–Columbia
Georgia State University	University of Montana
Governors State University	University of North Carolina
Indiana University	University of North Texas
Ithaca College	University of Northern Colorado
Jacksonville University	University of Oklahoma
Johns Hopkins University	University of Rhode Island
Kansas State University	University of South Alabama
Kent State University	University of Tennessee
Lehigh University	University of Texas
McGill University	University of Toledo
North Carolina State University	University of Virginia
Northern Illinois University	Valdosta State University
Nova Southeastern University	Virginia Tech University
Pennsylvania State University	Walden University
Purdue University	Wayne State University
Radford University	West Virginia University
San Diego State University	Western Illinois University
Southern Illinois University–Carbondale	Western Washington University
State University of New York–Potsdam	William Paterson University

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