

## **MOBILE LEARNING: Starting With The Why**

**Janet DAVIDSON, Ph.D.**  
**Chaminade University of Honolulu**  
**Honolulu, HI USA**

**Jace HARGIS, Ph.D.**  
**University of California, San Diego**  
**La Jolla, CA USA**

### **WHY MOBILE LEARNING**

In Simon Sinek's (2011) book, "Start with Why," he reminds us that the "why" engages us emotionally, while the what and how we do something serves as the evidence of the belief. This approach mimics the powerful educational backward design model by Wiggins and McTighe (1998), where they encourage instructors to begin with learner outcomes, followed by gathering evidence (assessment), and finally designing the learner active experience.

For this issue of GLOKALde, we selected the topic of Mobile Learning and also began with the question of "Why." The concept of mobility is certainly not a new one, although the ability to efficiently and consistently connect with wireless internet capacity, coupled with stable, easy to use applications, in a relatively cost effective way has changed the playing field for potential educational uses. However, these factors are not the reasons "Why" we selected and pursued our research on the potential effectiveness of Mobile Learning in higher education. Our primary "Why" was the benefit that we saw in combining mobile learning with knowledge from prior literature on informal learning and operationalizing the mobility with the power of foundational learning theories (Cavanaugh, Hargis, Kamali, & Soto, 2013; Hargis, 2001; Hargis & Soto, 2013; Hargis, Cavanaugh, Kamali, & Soto, 2013; Hargis, Cavanaugh, Kamali, & Soto, 2014).

The goal was to empower faculty and subsequently students to extend teaching and learning moments beyond the formal, artificial classroom and enable students to engage in connecting conceptual frameworks when and where they were encountered (at home, at a coffee shop, in the mall, etc.) and capture the ideas in a way that made sense to them.

The mobile learning studies included in this issue include students capturing those experiences using social media, gamification, media-rich applications and more. This approach aligns with a popular nonlinear constructivist approach, of which many studies have supported, as well as our nonlinear opportunities of the world wide web support (Hargis, 2000).

Why we believe that Mobile Learning aligns well with GLOKALde is that both emphasize the importance for providing useful, current research on appropriate, relevant and meaningful (ARM) instructional technology, which supports Distance Education. We also clearly perceive another important facet of Mobile Learning as the ubiquity in low cost functional devices, which provides additional access to information for people and countries across the world that had previously struggled to gain consistent access.

This aligns with a major philosophy of GLOKALde - open access. Another key aspect of GLOKALde's goals is to "extend its readership by reaching every part of the world ... by sharing experiences on effective use of distance education in both formal and non-formal education fields" (GLOKALde, 2016). Our approach to integrating Mobile Learning addresses both of the primary goals, i.e., wide accessibility and providing multiple suggestions to capitalize on the power of non-formal education.

Overall, it is becoming more apparent that as cost for technology declines (in 1980, one Gb storage cost \$438,000 USD, and in 2016, 15 Gb storage is free at Google), the ability to provide access to functional technology increases and we, as educators, need to play a significant role in guiding the integration of technology into education through appropriate pedagogical and andragogical methods.

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#### **BIODATA and CONTACT ADDRESSES of the GUEST EDITORS**



**Dr. Janet T. DAVIDSON** is an Assoc. Prof. of Criminology & Criminal Justice at Chaminade University of Honolulu. Her research interests include recidivism, community corrections, risk and need assessment instruments, and gender and crime. Her work has appeared in *Feminist Criminology*, *Critical Criminology*, *Women and Criminal Justice*, *Sociology Compass* and *Federal Probation*. She is the author of a book titled *Female Offenders and Risk Assessment: Hidden in Plain Sight*. She has been active in applied research on Hawaii's correctional system for the past fifteen years, including work with the Department of Public Safety, Hawaii Paroling Authority, Hawaii State Judiciary (Adult Probation), and Girls Court Hawaii.

**Janet T. DAVIDSON, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor, Criminology & Criminal Justice  
Chaminade University of Honolulu  
3140 Waiialae Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96816 USA  
Email: [jdavidso@chaminade.edu](mailto:jdavidso@chaminade.edu)



**Dr. Jace HARGIS** currently assists faculty as the Director of the Center for Engaged Teaching at the University of California, San Diego. His prior positions include a College Director in Abu Dhabi, UAE; an Assoc. Provost of Faculty Development, Assessment and Research and Professor in Honolulu; an Assist. Provost of Faculty Development and Associate Professor in northern California; and a Director of Faculty Development and Assist. Prof. in Florida. He has authored a textbook, an anthology and published over 100 academic articles as well as offered hundreds of academic presentations. He has earned a B.S. in Oceanography from Florida Institute of Technology; an M.S. in Environmental Engineering Sciences and a Ph.D. in Science Education from the University of Florida.

**Jace HARGIS, Ph.D.**  
Director, Center for Teaching and Learning  
University of California, San Diego  
La Jolla, CA 92093 USA  
Email: [jace.hargis@gmail.com](mailto:jace.hargis@gmail.com)