

Employer & Department: The University of Southern Mississippi

Learning Enhancement Center

Location: Hattiesburg, MS

1. What is the official job description for your position? Interactive Course Design Specialist

- Works closely with the LEC staff to develop courses for online delivery. Responsibilities include uploading and organizing content to The University's online management system
- Assists in the development of learning objects through multimedia softwares, such as podcasts, audio and video files, virtual classroom, and other emerging technologies
- Supports faculty success within the newly developed online courses and programs by providing training and documentation throughout the development phase
- Supports The University's online learning management system through one-on-one assistance and mentoring

2. What differences have you experienced between your actual duties and the official description?

- The main difference in the job description is I don't use multimedia software to develop learning objects. My main concentration is with the LMS, Blackboard, providing expertise, documentation, training and trouble-shooting.

3. Which of your education and employment experiences best prepared you to qualify for this position?

- My time spent as a Graduate Assistant in the Construction Department, where I was tasked with the redesign of content for online delivery for the B.S. Construction Engineering Technology.
- Time spent with Sunguard's and Blackboard's instructional design consultants.
- My previous years working in the education, K-5 as art teacher provided an understanding of universal design for teaching.

4. In your opinion, what additional education and/or employment experiences would have better prepared you for your position?

- I can't say if there is any education or employment situation which would have prepared me. For those who are looking to for a position like mine should:
  - make sure the Instructional design background is strong
  - develop analytical skills
  - understand storyboarding to improve organizational skills

5. What technologies do you utilize in your position (software, hardware, other)?

- Software: Blackboard, Collaborate, PeopleSoft, Photoshop, Camtasia, Dreamweaver, Word, Excel
- Hardware: PC, Mac, iPad

6. Would you "walk" me through what you would describe as a "typical" day on the job?

- Blackboard Admin – trigger PeopleSoft to create courses in Blackboard
- Identify problems and troubleshoot problems with Blackboard
- Contact Blackboard Support if problem is with the Blackboard system
- Provide instructors with fixes for their problems with Blackboard
- Create new or update existing documentation on Blackboard tools
- Create and implement training workshops

7. Could you describe your favorite parts of your job and what makes them your favorite?

- I like being able to quickly provide instructors answers to their Blackboard problems.

8. Would you discuss problems you have encountered in your job and how those problems were addressed and resolved?

- My job entails a good deal of trouble-shooting. In doing so I replica the problem, evaluate using different browsers, test using PC, Mac and iPad. I also check to things from the student view. This leads me to resolutions or the necessary information to submit tickets to Blackboard Support.

9. Have you encountered any aspect(s) of your position that came as a complete surprise to you?

- No

10. What ideas might you have for furthering personal professional development in positions such as yours?

- Apprenticeship or internship provides the opportunity for hands-on experience and development of analytical skills

11. What experiences in your position might be most useful to someone wishing to transition into the commercial—rather than educational—sector?

- All companies do not use the same software, but the majority of software programs operate similarly. However, a good understanding of Instructional design is important in developing content whether it be for commercial or educational.

12. What advice can you give for those seeking employment in the field of instructional technology?

- Do not expect this field to be filled with the “new and exciting”. The job entails a good deal of redundancy. The important thing is to make sure to invest yourself in learning more about what is new.

13. How do you see instructional technology developing in the future, especially as it relates to your position and similar opportunities?

- Understanding the development of Apps will become common place and more important than Power point ever was.

14. Thank you again for your participation in this project! Please add below any additional information you think I could find helpful, anecdotal, informative, and/or amusing?

Expect your employer to ask more of you than what is written in the job description. Be flexible and let each failure be a stepping stone to betterment.

~Rhonda J. Reid