

Leveraging time: persistent simulations and long lasting learning scenarios

Call for Workshop Contributions



December 2 – 3, 2009, in Garmisch-Partenkirchen (Germany)

Organiser

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Program Committee

Frank Fischer (Munich)
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Call for Participation

Interested researchers should submit a one-page abstract to the organiser by August 26, 2009. A maximum of six participants will be selected by the review committee. Acceptance will be notified on September 4, 2009.

Workshop Format

The format of the workshop is not a mini-conference or symposium. It is based on question-oriented organisation with the goal to produce a synthesis of questions, and a plan of action to write a paper (after the workshop). We look for contributions presenting empirical studies with repeated time data in context of long lasting student investigations supported by technologies, or contributions on tools used in persistent simulations and their benefit for long lasting learning scenarios. Theoretical contributions are also welcome.

Day 1 (Wednesday) 8:30-12:30 and 16:30-20:30, Day 2 (Thursday) 8:30-12:30 and 13:30-15:00.

Before the workshop: all participants are expected to have checked and written at least one entry in a blog that will be dedicated to this workshop.

Day 1: Each participant presents their own work or a review of others' work on a particular theme.

Day 2: We prepare for future work that will lead to a paper. First, there is a brainstorming session with the goal to select several themes that we choose to focus on. Then, we will divide the workshop into groups, each working on one theme and with the goal to produce a paragraph that defines the theme and its limits. The last afternoon of the workshop is devoted to the writing of the

work plan for the paper and the division of work among the participants.

Description Abstract

The focus is on simulations and associated pedagogical scenarios that can support long lasting student-led investigations. The learning approaches are inquiry learning, project-based learning, problem-based learning or game-based learning when they extend over several sessions and even several weeks. Learners become meaningfully involved in authentic investigation, in a process of ‘opening up’ for appropriation of the result to achieve and exploration of several ideas, and ‘closing down’ for better quality decisions and solutions.

Why does time matter? Learning is not instantaneous. For significant learning we need to revisit ideas, ponder them, try them out, play with them and use them. Creative breakthroughs often come when we take time to reflect. Indeed, slow thinking is needed to make sense of the whole picture, and with time inexperienced students can solve complex problems. Important benefits offered by long lasting simulations are that they allow students to study a phenomenon that unfold slowly, to focus on strategies rather than just results, and to find creative and personal solutions.

What technologies? In persistent worlds or simulations, technologies are used to reinforce the immersion of learners when they come back to their investigation. Persistent simulations also provide opportunities for incidental learning by running and being accessible continuously over extended period of time. Often they evolve without learners’ intervention, due to other learners’ activities (e.g. multi players games) or following the course of a dynamic model (e.g. embedded phenomena). As things happen when they happen and not only when learners decide to attend to them, students have to adjust, find their own way (with or without scaffolding provided by teachers, peers, or software), and learn.

Several aspects may be developed and lead to conclusions concerning important features to take into account when designing environments that support learners in long lasting scenarios, including the following: adapting the time scale of the simulation to the time scale of teaching and learning – maintaining continuity between different spaces and at different time – helping students to plan over extended periods of time – maintaining motivation over time – helping students with successive self assessment and revisions, etc.

The Alpine Rendez-Vous

This 2009 Alpine Rendez-Vous is the second event of a series. It is organized and funded by STELLAR, a new European network of excellence on learning technologies (<http://www.stellarnet.eu/>). It is not a conference but a set of independent workshops held in the same hotel during the same week. Five workshops will be held on the Monday-Tuesday and four other workshops on the Wednesday-Thursday. On the Tuesday afternoon, all workshop participants are invited to join a common section, the Rendez-Vous, ending up with a social event.

Financial aspects

Participants will be selected based on their submissions. There are no registration fees. Participants pay for their own travel. Funding for hotel and food will be available for a number of participants.

Location and venue

Check the The Alpine Rendez-Vous web site for more information:
<http://www.stellarnet.eu/programme/wp3/rendez-vous/>