



# LINDENWOOD

## UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

### **Emerging Technologies and the Future of Education**

April 21, 2023

Sponsored by Lindenwood University and the International Journal of Emerging and Disruptive Innovation in Education (iJEDIE)

*Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual and augmented reality, and online learning platforms have the potential to greatly impact the future of education. These can enhance the personalization and customization of the learning experience, make education more accessible and efficient, and improve the ability to measure and track student progress. This panel brings together researchers and practitioners from a wide range of fields, including Education Technology, Digital Humanities, Extended Reality (XR), Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, and more to present their recent research into how emerging technologies may be used to disrupt, enhance, and/or revolutionize traditional approaches to education for the benefit of both teachers and learners.*



**VISIONARIUM**

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EMERGING AND DISRUPTIVE INNOVATION IN EDUCATION



# SCHEDULE

There will be 20 minutes allotted for each for presentations with an additional 10 min for questions and answers at the end before moving on to the next presenter.

## Opening Ceremony and Welcome Address- Dr. James Hutson 8:30-9:00am (2:30-3:00pm GMT):

### SESSION 1

9:00-9:30am (3:00-3:30pm GMT)

#### Presenter(s):

- Dr. Alexandru Capatina, Professor, Universitatea „Dunărea de Jos” din Galați, Romania
- Nina Jane Patel, Head of Metaverse Research, Kabuni, U.K.
- Kiril Mitrov, Teaching and Research Fellow, Zurich University, Switzerland

**Project Title:** Towards an Understanding of the Metaverse: A Global Study on the Educator's Perspective of Emerging and Web 3 Technology

**Abstract:** We are experiencing rapid shifts in how we interact, learn, work, and maintain our health. Technology is influencing all aspects of human behavior including education. By the time today's children are the graduates of 2030, the world will be vastly different from anything previous generations have experienced. Researchers conducted a literature review, and global research of educators' views on the potential of immersive technology enabled by blockchain as a platform for delivering education content to students ages 8-16.

### SESSION 2

9:30-10:00am (3:30-4:00pm GMT)

#### Presenter(s):

- Dr. Gary Burnett, Professor, Head of the Human Factors Research Group, University of Nottingham, UK
- Dr. Catherine Harvey, Assistant Professor, Human Factors Research Group, University of Nottingham, UK

**Project Title:** An Investigation of the Advantages and Disadvantages of University Students as Avatars in Virtual Learning Spaces

**Abstract:** Authors have noted the increasing importance of avatars in Higher Education, as more teaching is conducted virtually, drawing upon gaming conventions. However, it is also recognized that little is known about how students make use of avatars (especially over an extended period) and the subsequent impact on learning experiences. For the last three years, a module in the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Nottingham, UK has been conducted within a virtual world, termed Nottopia – where students (49 in 2020; 95 in 2021;

122 in 2022) predominately interact with each other and teaching staff in avatar form. Observation data constitutes 60 hours of video recordings of virtual world seminars. Students have also been surveyed (40% response rate) and interviewed. The experience of learning while in avatar form has been extremely positive, with students expressing a number of advantages to being an avatar – including the ability to express oneself in original/engaging ways, the ability to move freely in the environment (less restricted by social norms), increased confidence to speak up in class, reduced concern over actual physical appearance, and being praised for their avatar. Nevertheless, disadvantages were also apparent – including the distraction of certain avatars, inappropriate behaviors, usability challenges in designing an avatar, and lack of sense of self. An initial design framework for the use of avatars in Higher Education is proposed.

## SESSION 3

10:00-10:30am (4:00-4:30pm GMT)

### Presenter(s):

- Dr. Melissa Elmes, Associate Professor of English, Lindenwood University, USA

**Project Title:** Using Video Games to Jumpstart Student Research in the Humanities Classroom

**Abstract:** The recent and widespread interest in role-playing games in the classroom (for example, the hugely popular “Reacting to the Past”) does not surprise me; I have used gaming in my classes for many years. I employ medieval-themed video games like Skyrim, Lord of the Rings online, and Sims: Medieval to harness and retain student interest in open-ended inquiry and research in my medieval literature and culture courses. This assignment is best for grades 9-12 and university undergraduate Literature, History, or Art History classes. It works well with both general education and subject-major students because it focuses on the students’ interests, harnessing their natural curiosity. It requires a teacher willing to de-center the research assignment and help students locate resources even when their research topic is not in the teacher’s areas of specialization. This assignment thus offers teachers opportunity to create collaborative learning communities that extend beyond the classroom to research librarians and other faculty and subject-area experts, fostering inter-departmental and inter-institutional cooperation. With the rise of AI writing apps and attendant concerns about students not writing their own papers, I believe the best means of combatting such concerns is to ensure students are meaningfully engaged in original research that matters to them so they want to write it up. Using video games to jumpstart their research projects harnesses their intrinsic interests through gaming, which seems recreational rather than scholarly to them and thus, less threatening intellectually. By the time students have completed the initial inquiry process—played the game and completed reflection work—they have developed a real desire to know more about their chosen subject, making it more likely they will follow through with research. It is then up to the professor to ensure that process is both challenging and supportive, so students want to complete the work. This project thus harnesses Lindenwood’s RISE (Rigor, Inclusiveness, Support, and Engagement) pedagogical pillars in practice. My panel discussion will detail my theory and the logistics for this approach to the research project. The article that follows will document the project and outcomes in a new, 200-level general education literature course on “The Medieval World” which I am teaching in Spring 2023.

## SESSION 4

10:30-11:00am (4:30-5:00pm GMT)

### Presenter(s):

- Dr. Naresh Kshetri, Assistant Professor of Cybersecurity, Lindenwood University, St. Charles, MO, USA

- Dr. Keith Miller, Orthwein Endowed Professor for Lifelong Learning in the Sciences, University of Missouri - Saint Louis, St. Louis, MO, USA
- Dr. Gaurango Banerjee, Professor of Finance, Lindenwood University, St. Charles, MO, USA
- Dr. Bikesh Upreti Lecturer, Department of Business Information Systems, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

**Project Title:** FinChain: Adaptation of Blockchain Technology in Finance and Business - An Ethical Analysis of Applications, Challenges, Issues and Solutions

**Abstract:** Blockchain Technology is a distributed database technology that has emerged as a ground-breaking technology with several possible solutions to critical applications, say from supply chain management, agribusiness, marketing to healthcare industry including internet of medical things. Although it started as a digital coin (popularly known as bitcoin), it is slowly influencing business, marketing policy and society. We have presented an in-depth study and ethical analysis of how blockchain is applied over the economic and financial sector including banks, credit unions and other retail giants. During our research, we have also investigated how blockchain technology can affect financial institutions around the world and businesses including large and small businesses. Our contributions included the following: (i) classifying blockchain models and architecture for finance and business markets (ii) analyzing recent and relevant works for finance applications and business solutions using blockchain (iii) discussing the advantages of using blockchain technology in financial institutions like banks and government firms (iv) pointing out challenges and issues of blockchain technology for finance and business organizations (v) summarizing future research on integration and adaptation of blockchain technology along with C2C, B2C, and B2B with finance and recommendations for improvement.

## Lunch/ Happy Hour Break

11:00-11:30am (5:00-5:30pm GMT)

### SESSION 5

11:30am-12:00pm (5:30-6:00pm GMT)

**Presenter(s):**

- Dr. Jason Gulya, Professor of English, Berkeley College, USA

**Project Title:** Originality in the Age of AI: A Collaborative Future

**Abstract:** “Originality” has long been central to the college classroom. “Be original. Be creative. Be bold.” These words—whether explicit or implicit—guide many classes. The suggestion? Being original means relying only on one’s wit and creativity. This model of originality no longer works. Now, learning does not resemble the ivory tower. It’s no longer the case that an individual would pore over a tome, hoping that reading would produce a spark. Modern learning is social and collaborative. Learners compare what they learn in class to what they find online, for better or worse. They make information stick by conversing (IRL or virtually), questioning, and comparing. In my presentation, I will argue that collaborative originality is the future of higher education. Collaboration is more than a way to share ideas; it’s a way to generate them. It thrives in boundary-blurring. The neat boundaries between humans and machines, between disciplines, and between informal and formal learning are blurring. Modern originality is collaborative and interdisciplinary. The rise of AI has accelerated this process. At a moment’s notice, I can bring up ChatGPT or Hyperwrite and, using prompt engineering, create ideas alongside a virtual assistant. This kind of tech has revolutionized what we mean by “originality.”

## SESSION 6

12:00-12:30pm (6:00-6:30pm GMT)

### Presenter(s):

- Dr. Paula McDowell, Assistant Professor, Curriculum Studies, Educational Technology and Design (ETAD), University of Saskatchewan, Canada

**Project Title:** “VR Let My Creativity Out”: Youth Creating with Immersive Learning Technologies

**Abstract:** Creativity helps today's youth understand and express themselves, broaden their perspectives, and develop resilience and resourcefulness— preparing them to address life's challenges. Being creative is widely regarded as an essential life and career skill in our technology-driven world where automation and machines are now performing routine tasks and labor. Educators need to make teaching creativity a priority; however, fostering creative learning environments in classrooms is challenging, partly due to a standardized curriculum and quantifying assessments that suppress creativity, leaving students inadequately prepared for future success. This qualitative study investigated the affordances and constraints of youth creating with immersive learning technologies. A class of 28 students in grade 8, ages 13 and 14, were invited to participate as the co-researchers. Data collection methods included student-led pair interviews, sharing circles, surveys, participant observation, and artifact analysis. Research activities involved guided learning adventures in AltspaceVR, collaborative painting in MultibrushVR, and a team design challenge in FrameVR. Findings show that the immersive learning environments were safe spaces for the youth to take creative risks, not fear mistakes, have autonomy and control of their learning, and collaborate with friends in new ways. Although some co-researchers experienced dizziness or nausea from using the Meta Quest headsets, 94% would like to learn more in virtual reality (VR). 78% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: VR helped me to express myself creatively. 88% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: I had the freedom to make decisions about my learning in VR. Our results demonstrate how well-designed immersive education can offer an innovative solution for teachers struggling to foster creativity and ingenuity in their classrooms. We anticipate the data collected in this study to be a starting point for further research on understanding the capacity of immersive learning technologies to enhance youth creativity, wonder, and imagination.

## SESSION 7

12:30-1:00pm (6:30-7:00pm GMT)

### Presenter(s):

- Dr. Jeremy Carnes, Associate Professor of English, Lindenwood University, USA
- Dr. Margaret K. Smith, Research Assistant Professor of Digital Humanities, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, USA

**Project Title:** A Regional Network to Address Inequities in Digital Humanities Education

**Abstract:** In this presentation, we will discuss an ongoing collaboration to build a pedagogy-focused digital humanities (DH) network for the greater St. Louis metropolitan area. In developing the network, we have drawn upon lessons learned by other efforts at networking under-resourced institutions of higher education for the purposes of sharing digital humanities resources and advancing DH pedagogy and access for underserved populations, but we have also broken new ground by including secondary education institutions as equal partners.

The network responds to inequities in academia (with the goal of dismantling hierarchies between secondary and postsecondary education and between well-resourced and under-resourced institutions) and in the region (seeking to address the impacts of St. Louis's persistent racial and economic segregation on pedagogy). We hope to create more equitable access to DH education throughout the region and contribute to broader social justice goals. Recently, undergraduate and grade school education have begun to receive more attention from DH scholars. A special issue of Digital Humanities Quarterly devoted to undergraduate education appeared in 2017, and conferences have drawn attention to secondary and postsecondary DH education. While encouraging, much work remains to be done in developing sustainable infrastructures to support the role of DH in high school and college curricula. Moreover, in the absence of increases in public funding, inequities in resources and training between institutions can only be addressed through the pooling of resources across institutional boundaries. The St. Louis Digital Humanities Network was created to address these needs. The project formally kicked off in April 2022 with a mutual-learning workshop, at which the project co-directors met with secondary education faculty to develop network priorities. Another workshop in September 2022 brought together secondary and postsecondary faculty to set in motion network collaborations. In our presentation, we will discuss the workshops' key findings and collaborative projects, including a curated website of digital humanities lessons, a regional showcase of student DH work, and the development of partnerships with local history and culture institutions.

## SESSION 8

1:00-1:30pm (7:00-7:30pm GMT)

### Presenter(s):

- Dr. David Neville, Director of the Grinnell College Immersive Experiences Lab (GCIEL), Digital Liberal Arts Specialist, Grinnell College
- Dr. Timothy D. Arner, Associate Dean of Curriculum and Academic Programs, Professor of English, Grinnell College
- Dr. Austin Mason, Director of Digital Arts and Humanities, Assistant Director of the Humanities Center for Digital Humanities, Lecturer in History, Carleton College

**Project Title:** The Virtual Viking Longship Project: A Study in the Future of Liberal Arts Teaching and Research

**Abstract:** This presentation introduces The Virtual Viking Longship Project, which aims to explore and test strategies for integrating undergraduate student learning and labor in the development of long-term Digital Humanities (DH) research projects. Combining the strengths of two leading liberal arts colleges with the multidisciplinary affordances of virtual reality (VR) technologies, the project aims to create an immersive VR experience for visualizing the social and cultural roles of a Viking Age longship by forming a DH community of inquiry and practice that cultivates deep competencies in spatial computing within the context of a liberal arts education.

**Closing Reception / Virtual Happy Hour**  
1:30-2:00pm (7:30-8:00pm GMT)

# PRESENTERS



## **Dr. Timothy D. Arner**

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Associate Dean of Curriculum and Academic Programs

Professor of English

Grinnell College, USA

Dr. Arner specializes in medieval literature. His research and teaching interests include the writings of Geoffrey Chaucer, the influence of classical texts on Middle English poetry, and the intersections between fourteenth- and fifteenth-century literature and politics. He has published articles on Chaucer's "The Miller's Tale" and Troilus and Criseyde, and he has presented papers on Lucan, Chaucer, Lydgate, Spenser, and Shakespeare. Recently, Tim collaborated with a group of students to produce The Grinnell Beowulf, a translation and critical edition of the Old English poem. Tim is currently working on his first book project, Trojan Wars: Genre and the Politics of Authorship in Late Medieval and Early Modern England, which examines the rewriting of the Troy legend in England from Chaucer to Shakespeare. He received his B.A. from The American University (2000) and his M.A. (2002) and Ph.D. from The Pennsylvania State University (2006).



## **Dr. Gaurango Banerjee**

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Professor of Finance

Lindenwood University, USA

Dr. Banerjee completed a master's and doctorate degree at the finance and economics program at the University of Alabama. He received a bachelor's of engineering and economics in the dual degree program at BITS Pilani, India. Dr. Banerjee completed the requirements for the Chartered Financial Analyst program and was awarded the CFA designation. He has been a faculty advisor for the CFA Research Challenge Student teams at Lindenwood University, and is currently serving as an advisory board member for university relations at the St. Louis CFA Society. He has presented at a number of peer-reviewed regional and national conferences and published his research in over 15 peer reviewed journals in his field. His current research interests lie in bank risk management and corporate governance issues and effects of blockchain technology on financial applications.



## **Dr. Gary Burnett**

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Professor

Head of the Human Factors Research Group

University of Nottingham, UK

Gary Burnett is a Professor in Human Factors in the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Nottingham in the UK. He leads a team of researchers and PhD students focused on automotive human factors – in particular the design and evaluation of the Human-Machine Interfaces for future vehicles. For several years, Professor Burnett has taught students on the use of simulation and Virtual Reality (VR) in engineering design – and, recently has pioneered the use of social VR as means to engage with students wholly in virtual worlds.



## **Dr. Alexandru Capatina**

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Professor

Universitatea „Dunărea de Jos” din Galați, Romania

Alexandru Capatina is Professor, PhD Supervisor in Management and Vice-Dean for Research and International Affairs at Faculty of Economics and Business Administration from Dunarea de Jos University of Galati, Romania. He plays the role of Business Innovation Coach at European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency from European Commission. He is also solopreneur, founding INNO OPPO and delivering training and coaching in business innovation.

His research is focused on Digital Innovation, Web Entrepreneurship and Marketing. Being devoted to experiential learning in entrepreneurial education, he has been certified as trainer for digital business games: Simbound and DIG (Discovery-Innovation-Growth). He plays the role of Kabuni Ambassador in Romania of a safe Metaverse for Education.

He attended many international academic conferences and co-authored more than 80 research papers, most of them being indexed in Scopus and Web of Science. Most representative papers can be found on his ORCID profile: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5439-838X>





## **Dr. Jeremy Carnes**

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Associate Professor of English

Lindenwood University, USA

Dr. Carnes earned his Ph.D. in English from the University of Michigan (2012), where he also formed his interest in the digital humanities while working for the Early English Books Online Text Creation Partnership, an initiative that has digitized and marked up the majority of printed English books published prior to 1700 according to Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) standards. For the past several years, he has worked to improve digital humanities pedagogy at his institution and other institutions in the region, facilitating faculty learning opportunities in the digital humanities. He has led multiple workshops for faculty, and with Dr. Margaret K. Smith, he has established the St. Louis Digital Humanities Network, bringing together digital humanists in the greater St. Louis area and improving communication on DH initiatives. Their ongoing NEH-funded project, “Expanding Access to the Digital Humanities in St. Louis,” is working to reduce inequities in digital humanities education in the region. Outside of his work in the digital humanities, Carnes is the author of a number of publications on eighteenth-century literature and Gothic literature, including a monograph, *The Papist Represented: Literature and the English Catholic Community, 1688-1791* (U of Delaware P, 2017).



## **Dr. Melissa Elmes**

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Associate Professor of English

Lindenwood University, USA

Dr. Elmes is trained as an interdisciplinary and comparative literary critic, historian, and philologist. As a scholar, she is interested in the linguistic presence of ideas in texts and how they shift over time; in cultural poetics—the relationships between texts and the cultures that produce them, and in turn between texts and the audiences that receive them; and in the silences and lacunae in texts and narratives and how we can use them generatively as thinkers to (re) construct textual and narrative meaning and significance both historically and for modern audiences. In these various endeavors, Dr. Elmes is invested in locating ways in which cross-temporal and cross-geographical approaches and multiple methodologies can be used in tandem to create a more focused and nuanced lens on a given subject. To that end, she makes use of theoretical paradigms and critical methods used in fields ranging from English, History, Gender, Art History, Anthropology, Cultural/ Material, Popular, and Ecocritical Studies in my research and writing. Her scholarship in medievalism participates in the ongoing critical examination of medieval subjects in contemporary culture, and the reclamation of medieval history and culture from the ideologically-driven scholarship and reception that has permitted medieval studies to be used for white supremacist and nationalist purposes.



## **Dr. Jason Gulya**

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Professor of English

Berkeley College, USA

Dr. Jason J. Gulya is Professor of English at Berkeley College. He teaches onsite, online, hybrid, and accelerated courses on writing and the humanities. In 2020, he received Berkeley's Faculty of the Year Award for Teaching Excellence. His writing is widely available. He has published articles in *Literary Imagination*, *Pedagogy*, *Bunyan Studies*, and many other journals. He has also written book chapters for *The Oxford Handbook of Allegory* (Oxford University Press), *Allegory Studies* (Routledge), *Adapting the Eighteenth Century* (University of Rochester Press). He published his first book, *Allegory in Enlightenment Britain: Literary Abominations*, with Palgrave Macmillan in December 2022. Currently, he is researching the link between the "literary mind" and the future of work.



## **Dr. Catherine Harvey**

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Assistant Professor

Human Factors Research Group

University of Nottingham, UK

Dr. Harvey is an Assistant Professor in the Human Factors Research Group at the University of Nottingham. She previously held an Anne McLaren (Nottingham) Research Fellowship between 2013 and 2020 and moved into an academic role in February 2020. Dr. Harvey's academic background is in usability evaluation, Human Factors methods and HCI and has applied this knowledge in a variety of domains, including transport, sociotechnical systems, and aviation. She has been awarded an Engineering Doctorate (EngD) in 2012 from the University of Southampton. Her EngD research focused on the usability of in-vehicle interfaces and Ergonomics evaluation methods and was sponsored by Jaguar Land Rover. Finally, Dr. Harvey also holds a BSc in Ergonomics (Hons) from Loughborough University.



## **Dr. Naresh Kshetri**

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Assistant Professor of Cybersecurity

Lindenwood University, St. Charles, MO, USA

Dr. Kshetri is currently an Assistant Professor of Cybersecurity at the Department of Math, CS, and IT, Lindenwood University. He completed his PhD (Computer Science) from University of Missouri – St. Louis (UMSL), graduated with an MS (Cybersecurity) from Webster University, and also earned an MCA (Computer Applications) degree from University of Allahabad. With more than nine years of experience and research interests in Cybersecurity,

Blockchain technology, he has published in various journals, conferences, and book chapters. His research is funded by the University of Missouri – St. Louis, MO, USA and the Lindenwood University, MO, USA. Dr. Naresh has taught various CS courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. His teaching horizon expands from high school level teaching to university level teaching. He is also a member of IEEE and Associate Editor for Journal of Digital Security and Forensics. He loves watching biopic movies and playing chess during his free times. For more about Dr. Naresh, please visit his website at <https://sites.google.com/view/NareshKshetri>



## **Dr. Austin Mason**

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Director of Digital Arts and Humanities

Assistant Director of the Humanities Center for Digital Humanities

Lecturer in History

Carleton College, USA

Dr. Mason is the founding Director of the Digital Arts & Humanities minor program, Assistant Director of the Humanities Center for Digital Humanities, and Lecturer in History at Carleton College, where his responsibilities include integrating digital methods deeply into the Liberal Arts curriculum and co-supervising Digital Humanities Associate and Digital Scholarship Intern undergraduate programs. He holds a PhD in History from Boston College, with an emphasis on religious history, material culture, archaeology, spatial humanities and the digital humanities, and an M.St. in Medieval British History from Oxford University. His current book project, *Listening to the Early Medieval Dead: Religious Practices in England, c.400-900 CE* has been supported by grants from ACLS and the Mellon Foundation and was awarded the CGS/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award in the Humanities. He teaches courses on early medieval Europe, the Vikings, and DH methods, and is currently working on a number of 3D DH projects, ranging from photogrammetry of early medieval English religious material culture to VR, GIS and video game projects in collaboration with scholars of colonial America, eighteenth-century Britain, and nineteenth-century Luxembourg.



## **Dr. Paula McDowell**

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Assistant Professor, Curriculum Studies

Educational Technology and Design (ETAD)

University of Saskatchewan, Canada

Dr. Paula MacDowell, Ph.D., is a recognized leader in the scholarship of immersive learning, instructional design, and technologies for pro-social and environmental change. She is the co-editor of the book *Immersive Education: Designing for Learning*, which focuses on designing and being a designer of immersive education. Paula sits on the Immersive Learning Research Network (iLRN) Board of Directors as the Director of Practitioners and serves as a Practitioner Chair for the annual iLRN conference. Her professional interests include working collaboratively to mobilize research and practical knowledge of emerging technologies in K-12, higher education, work-based, and industry contexts.



## **Dr. Keith Miller**

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Orthwein Endowed Professor for Lifelong Learning in the Sciences

University of Missouri - Saint Louis, St. Louis, MO, USA

Dr. Keith W. Miller earned a BS in education, an MS in math, and a Ph.D. in computer science. He taught computer science for many years, and is now a member of UMSL's College of Education. Dr. Miller has hundreds of papers, presentations, and invited talks that he has authored or co-authored. As the Orthwein Endowed Professor for Lifelong Learning in the Sciences, Dr. Miller is working with the Saint Louis Science Center and other community partners to inspire students from K to grey to becoming engaged with science, technology, engineering and math. Dr. Miller's research areas include computer ethics, online education, and software testing.



## **Kiril Mitrov**

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Teaching and Research Fellow

Zurich University, Switzerland

Kiril is a researcher and lecturer on Blockchain/DLT with specialist expertise in Blockchain regulation in the EU. He analyses how and to what extent existing legal frameworks apply to specific blockchain applications and whether they are fit-for-purpose. He further explores how regulations could be improved and adapted to the decentralised nature of blockchain technology.

Kiril holds an LL.M. degree in European Public Law and Governance from Maastricht University. He obtained his Bachelor of Law degree at the University of Montpellier, France and did an exchange year at KU Leuven, Belgium. He is the founder of the Blockchain Club UZH (non-profit), member of the Blockchain Competence Centre at University of Zurich (UZH) and a Research Fellow of the European Law Institute (ELI).



## **Dr. David Neville**

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Director of the Grinnell College Immersive Experiences Lab (GCIEL)

Digital Liberal Arts Specialist

Grinnell College, USA

Dr. David Neville (<https://doktorfrag.com>) is the Director of the Grinnell College Immersive Experiences Lab (GCIEL) and a Digital Liberal Arts Specialist at Grinnell College. He holds a PhD (2002) in German Language and Literature, with an emphasis in Medieval Studies and Latin, from Washington University in St. Louis and a MS (2007) in Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences from Utah State University. He has published on MS

(2007) in Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences from Utah State University. He has published on topics related to immersive learning environments, instructional games and simulations, problem-based learning, and the medieval period in Digital Philology, ReCALL, The Foreign Language Annals, Simulation & Gaming, Computer Assisted Language Learning, Journal of Interactive Teaching and Pedagogy, and Mystics Quarterly. His research interests include situated cognition, virtual reality, and digital game-based learning approaches to second language and culture acquisition.



## **Nina Jane Patel**

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Head of Metaverse Research

Kabuni, London, UK

Nina Jane Patel FRSA, RDMP, PhD (2024) is the co-founder and VP of Metaverse Research for Kabuni - dedicated to providing a safe space in the Metaverse to LEARN, GROW, EXPLORE.

In 2023, Nina was appointed as a Metaverse expert for Interpol, as it develops its international strategy for the future. In 2022, Nina was awarded by the Canada Council for the Arts for new research investigating the relationship of the body, movement and self-expression in the Metaverse.

Patel is a Registered Movement Psychotherapist and Doctoral Scholar at the University of Reading, awarded the Wilkie Calvert Scholarship - "Unlocking the Potential of Immersive Experiences for the Future of Human Society: Investigating the physiological and psychological impact of the Metaverse". Patel has been featured as an expert on BBC, DW (Germany), CNN, NBC Nightly News, NHK (Japan)'s coverage of the Metaverse.



## **Dr. Margaret K. Smith**

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Research Assistant Professor of Digital Humanities

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, USA

Dr. Smith is a medieval historian, digital humanist, and educator. Her research focuses on questions of power and identity in late medieval Ireland. She uses a variety of methodologies to explore how Gaelic Irish lords constructed individual and dynastic identities and established their legitimacy in a highly contested environment. In the bigger picture, Dr. Smith's research looks at how people develop strategies of negotiation that transcend categories of difference. She currently serves as a research assistant professor in the IRIS Center at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, where she collaborates with faculty, students, and community members on digital humanities research and pedagogy.



## **Dr. Bikesh Upreti**

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Lecturer, Department of Business  
Information Systems

University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

Bikesh Raj Upreti is a Lecturer in the Department of Business Information Systems at the University of Queensland (UQ) in Brisbane, Australia. He completed his doctoral degree from Aalto University School of Business, Helsinki. His doctoral dissertation, "Untangling the Application of Text-mining Methods in Information Systems Domain", focused on developing applications to uncover insights from the large-scale text data. After graduating, he continued as a postdoctoral researcher and visiting scholar at the Department of Information Service Management, Aalto Business school, before joining the University of Queensland. Bikesh's research interests are in the areas of applied computational methods and quantitative inquiry of inter-disciplinary phenomena. He has applied advanced machine learning, deep learning and other analytical tools for large-scale behavioural and predictive analytics set in Information systems, marketing, finance, and political discourses. His work has been published in several journals (European Journal of Information systems, Industrial Marketing Management, Journal of Travel Research, Electronic Markets) and peer-reviewed conference proceedings (ICIS, HICSS, and Bled).