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News - Georgia Southern University - Instructional Technology Specialist Degree Opens Minds and Doors

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*People, Libraries
and Agencies* **IN THE NEWS**

Georgia Southern University

Instructional Technology Specialist Degree Opens Minds and Doors

When Fay Edwards, a fourth grade reading teacher at Taylors Creek Elementary School in Hinesville, GA, was asked to participate in an iPad project nearly three years ago, her first response was “sure.” Her next response, she said, was “what are they?”

In just three years, iPads, tablets, and Chrome books have become ubiquitous. Yet how best to use technology to improve the teaching and learning process, and to contribute to inquiry and research that uses ideas and information in many formats, still hasn’t reached far into classrooms and boardrooms.

That’s where Georgia Southern University’s College of Education has created a unique niche through its Instructional Technology Program, designed specifically to support those who seek creative ways to use computers and other technologies for instruction.

The Department of Leadership, Technology, and Human Development offers advanced study opportunities in instructional technology. These courses provide teachers, media specialists, instructional supervisors and postsecondary personnel the skills and competence necessary to select and use technology in all its forms. Attention is directed to the unique needs of individuals who aspire to leadership positions in the instructional technology field.



The knowledge base that supports this rapidly changing field is linked to the classroom practitioner and administrator through structured experiences that model the design, development, use, management, and evaluation of learning resources.

The M.Ed. in Instructional Technology is approved as a “new field” upgrade by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) at the S-5 level. Those who would like to enhance their technology skills, but who don’t want state certification can obtain the M.Ed. in Instructional Technology without being certified in the public schools.

There’s no doubt that the technology field is growing at a rate that almost exceeds our capacity to understand how best to use its powerful teaching and learning capabilities. That’s where the Ed.S. in Instructional Technology and School Library Media Program steps in with a Specialist degree in each area of study. It’s a more intensive inquiry-based approach that emphasizes problem-solving and research skills applicable to a multitude of education topics and issues.

Dovetailing into the Instructional Technology Program is an Online Teaching Endorsement that helps professionals working with school librarians and tech specialists to help them develop online learning communities, online professional development modules and “flipped classroom” modules.

“We’re finding all these are growth areas for study,” said Dr. Charles Hodges, head of the

Instructional Technology Program. “It’s where we are as a society, and I believe it’s up to colleges of education to be in the forefront,” he continued.

Edwards’ experience was part of a project to test the effectiveness of iPads in the classroom. “With all the responsibilities we have as classroom teachers, I was very concerned as to how I would use them,” she said. With the help of the school’s tech staff, her iPad experiment was a resounding success.

And with COE’s Instructional Technology programs, educators, librarians and technology staff in and out of school systems can be assured they’re prepared to meet technology’s newest challenges.

For more information on Georgia Southern’s Instructional Technology Program, contact Dr. Hodges at itec@georgiasouthern.edu or look at our website at: <http://coe.georgiasouthern.edu/itec/>