



a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

**History of Communications, Media & Technology
in the Faculty of Education at UBC**

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There are various ways to address media and technology in education and these interpretations will manifest in quite distinct programmatic directions, sometimes complementary, sometimes antagonistic. For example, addressing technology as a tool suggests a different curriculum form than addressing technology as a medium of expression or technology as interdisciplinary. The first typically resolves as a study of media and technology as instrumental means to support and prop up various disciplinary curricula (e.g., art, business, history, language, math, science). The second resolves as a study of communication and expression, and the third resolves as a study of media and technology as interrelated forms of knowledge. Interdisciplinary knowledge includes processes of designing and reconfiguring learning technologies, contexts for these processes of production, and the effects or consequences of the use of media and technologies in education. Programmatically, the first takes the form of “technology across the curriculum,” the second as emergent literacies, while the third takes a form of knowledges across disciplines of media and technology (courses taught by specialists, degrees for preparing specialists, sustained research into learning, teaching and technology, etc.). It is rare in Colleges and Faculties of Education that one is offered in place of or at the expense of the other. All of these interpretations have been present in UBC’s Faculty of Education since at least the mid 1960s, and from the early 1980s onward there has been a tension between the academic Departments offering degrees in media and technology and service units dedicated to audio-visual, media and computing services. The historical sketch that follows focuses on graduate level programs related to Communications, Media and Technology.

An Audio-Visual Department (AV) was formed in the Faculty of Education in 1964, primarily due to increasing demands for specialists and associated curriculum and media materials, educational television and programmed instruction. Multiple sections of Education 414 (“Audio-Visual Technology in Education”) were taught to undergraduates and became a requirement in the early 1970s. Graduate degrees (M.A. & M.Ed.) and courses in audio-visual education were initiated in 1966. In 1972, the AV Department was renamed the Department of Communications, Media and Technology (CMT). By this time, the AV Department had 35 graduate students specializing in CMT. The AV Education M.A. and M.Ed. degrees were subsequently renamed to CMT degrees in 1975.

At the undergraduate level, “Audio-Visual Technology in Education” was changed to “Communications, Media and Technology in Learning” in 1972. Graduate courses, such as “Research in Audio-Visual Education for Schools” became “Design of Instructional Media Systems.” “Communication and the Mass Media” remained unchanged from

1957. A full offering of 10 graduate courses in CMT continued to be offered through 1986.

When the Faculty of Education opened its new building in 1962, a Curriculum Laboratory was included, which doubled as in-house library. The Curriculum Laboratory housed a large, range of Audio-visual materials, many of which were produced or utilized in AV and the Programmed Learning Centre. The opening of an Education Library in 1968 helped establish and reinforce the Library Education program in the Faculty through the 1970s. The Library eventually absorbed the bulk of the Curriculum Laboratory while AV components went to AV. Primarily due to Department Head Joseph Katz' leadership, Library Education remained a part of the Department of Curriculum or later the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies until 1984. At this time, the Department of Language Education expanded to include School Librarianship while other programs were moved into other curriculum units, such as the Department of Mathematics and Science Education. The School Librarianship program focused on the acquisition, classification, and cataloguing of materials, and also included two courses on "Sources of Information." As computers developed throughout the 1980s, these two courses focused on electronic information. Courses in the Faculty of Arts' School of Library, Archival and Information Studies (SLAIS), which was renamed from School Librarianship in 1984, supplemented the Library Education program. Today, the Teacher Librarianship program in the Department of Language and Literacy Education includes a curriculum focus similar to that of the mid 1980s and information technology courses are taken in SLAIS.

Major restructuring was recommended in 1979 and in 1981, the Faculty of Education consolidated from twenty-two departments or quasi-departments to eight departments. One result was that the Department of Curriculum Theory and Library Education was reformed into the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies (CINS) as a consolidation of Business Education, CMT, Curriculum and Instruction, Early Childhood, Elementary Education, Industrial Education, and School Librarianship. CMT was divided at this time, with professors, courses and programs moving into CINS and staff moving into a service unit renamed Audio-Visual and Media Services (MS). CINS was dissolved in 1983, with various faculty and specializations distributed among three departments. CMT was distributed among Mathematics and Science Education (MSED) and Administrative, Adult and Higher Education. For example, Dan Pratt was relocated to Adult Education along with the "Mass Media and Adult Education" course.

In 1987, signaling changes across the province specifically and North America in general, the Industrial Education (INED) program was changed to technology education. The Division of Industrial Education had been established coincidentally with UBC's new Faculty of Education in 1958, and had been annexed to the British Columbia Institute of Technology's (BCIT) campus since the mid 1960s. By the early 1970s, INED had expanded from a small unit graduating 15 students per year to one of the largest programs in the Faculty of Education. By this time, INED had increased to include nine full-time faculty members and had inaugurated a new building dedicated to the sole purpose of preparing industrial education teachers. An reorganization of the Faculty in 1986-1987

resulted in a downsizing of the INED program and re-allocation of two faculty members (LeDuc and Logan) to UBC while the balance tendered contracts with BCIT. Curriculum and Instruction courses were allocated to UBC's campus while technical courses remained at BCIT.

In 1986, the eleven CMT courses were dropped from the *Calendar*, ending a twenty-year period. After two years of the placing the CMT M.Ed. and M.A. in Educational Psychology and Special Education, under oversight of Seong-Soo Lee, the degrees were also dropped in 1986. However, stemming from a "Seminar in the Teaching of Computing Studies" course, introduced in 1982, a new era of media and technology was initiated by MSED. In 1986, MSED introduced a range of courses in Computing Studies Education (CSED). Technology Studies Education, encompassing CSED, was introduced in MSED as a graduate degree specialization in 1992 (M.Ed., M.A. & Ed.D. or Ph.D. concentration). Hence, Computing Studies referred to the courses and Technology Studies to the specialization, including the CMT, computing and technology education foci. Today, Technology Studies is described in the EDCP graduate brochure as an interdisciplinary specialization addressing ICT, new media, and digital media and learning.

In 1994, the Department of Curriculum Studies (CUST) was formed as a consolidation of MSED and Visual and Performing Arts in Education (VPAE). To complete the creation of CUST, social studies was moved from the Department of Social and Educational Studies (SEDS) and physical education was moved from the School of Physical Education and Recreation. By this time, the Ed.D. concentration within the Faculty had given way to the Ph.D., wherein Technology Studies remains a concentration to this moment among 8 others in the Department.

In 1983, the Educational Research Services Centre (ERSC) acquired the Faculty's first microcomputers (15 Apple IIe's), which were placed in room 1007. Six were targeted for MSED and Room 1107 was dedicated to shared use between ERSC and MSED. The plan was that the six MSED computers would be "loaned" back to ERSC when not used for instructional or research use in MSED. However, immediately upon the delivery of the Apple IIe's, the relationship between ERSC and MSED soured. Delivery of the machines was evidently hidden from MSED and access to the newly keyed room was difficult. As MSED Head David Robitaille wrote to Dean Birch in July 1983: "I object to what seems to have been an attempt to hide from us the fact that the machines had arrived.... I resent the lack of cooperation that is evident." Requests for key access to Room 1107 for technician Brian Kilpatrick were turned down months later. In the late 1980s, ERSC was reduced to a computing service unit and renamed Education Computing Services (ECS). The mandate was primarily one of computer laboratory maintenance and service. A result of this tension was that throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, MSED established independence from ECS by developing substantial computing and media infrastructure to support courses and research. By 1991, MSED hosted a network that included 44 Macintosh's, mostly in offices and the MacJanet Lab (1214), connected across four zones. Stand alone DOS and Apple IIe and IIg systems were also employed along with printers and scanners. This type of infrastructure for

teaching and research in CUST continues to the present, with three full labs dedicated to media and technology (i.e., 1025, 1106, 1224 & MUSES).

In 1987, the Faculty of Education's Field Development Office (established in 1975) became the Distance Education Office (DEO). The DEO was changed to the Office of Continuing Professional Education (OCPE) in 1996 and to External Programs and Learning Technologies (EPLT) in 2003. EPLT assumed administrative control over MS and ECS, which were consolidated into Computing and Media Services (CMS) in 2003.

In April 2001, with work and leadership from EDST and Tony Bates in the university's Distance Education and Technology unit, CUST proposed an online "Master of Educational Technology" program and degree, which was to complement the Technology Studies masters program. The program was initially proposed as a CUST program, but proceeded as a Faculty-wide program. As Department Head Rita Irwin noted in April 2001, "At a recent Department Meeting in the Department of Curriculum Studies, it was determined that if the department took this program on, the sheer size of the program would cause our department to become known as a department of educational technology. This was not seen as desirable considering our vast interests." CUST proposed six new courses in media and technology, including "Implementing Technology and New Media in the Teaching/Learning Environment," "Designs for On-line Learning and Teaching," "Technology in the Science and Mathematics Classroom," "Issues in E-Learning," "Epistemological Themes," and "Cultural and New Media Studies." Five of these became MET courses and CUST faculty developed a bulk of the courses in the MET program. The MET degree and program commenced in September 2002. One effect has been a marked reduction in M.Ed. enrollments in Technology Studies.

In 2005, an "ICT Diploma for K-12 Teachers" was offered for the first time during the summer sessions through Computing Studies Education. This CSED Diploma Program provides an opportunity for teachers in formal (public and private K-12 schools) and informal (museums, centers, community-based institutions) educational venues to improve their understanding and practical implementation of the pedagogical uses of information and communication technologies (ICT) within face-to-face, mixed-mode, and online distance education settings.

In 2008, a Human-Computer Interaction sub-specialization was approved in the Department. The HCI sub-specialization is offered in conjunction with the Media and Graphics Interdisciplinary Centre. Students opting for this sub-specialization explore human behaviour in technology-rich environments with a goal of informing the design and testing of new technologies. In the winter and spring of 2010, TSED began accepting applications for the first Digital Learning and Curriculum M.Ed. External Program cohort, which will commence July 2010.