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Virtual Worlds for Student Engagement

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Author(s)

Atul Sajjanhar

ABSTRACT

In this paper, we study the scope of virtual worlds for student engagement in higher education. The motivation for the study is the gap in opportunities for interactivity that exist for off-campus students compared with on-campus students. A student taking a course at a university, while located in a different geographic location, has limited opportunity for student-student and student-teacher interaction; this effects student engagement significantly. We conduct a feasibility analysis for engaging students in a virtual world; Second Life is used as the test-bed to create the virtual world environment. We present preliminary findings, the promises and the limitations of Second Life as an immersive environment for engaging students.

KEYWORDS

Student Engagement; Virtual Worlds; Second Life

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