Reflection from Hans Heim on the Adobe Faculty Development Institute

by Hans Heim, School of Information Technology Administration & Security

in the September 2020 issue

This summer, several Seneca faculty, including myself, were invited to participate in the Adobe Creative Campus Online Faculty Development Institute. The week-long event, which ran in mid-June, offered participants the opportunity to participate in talks and workshops covering several applications in Adobe's Creative Cloud suite of software. We were taken through tutorials, given the chance to create our own education-focused media, and participated in pedagogical and philosophical discussion around the use of creative tools in the classroom. It was a fun and highly-informative week which resulted in an abundance of new and evolving ideas on how we as educators can get the most out of ourselves and our students.

While I found all of the tutorials and workshops to be very interesting, it was the Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Premiere portions that got me thinking the most about how we can enhance our classrooms, especially given the current online structure that much of Seneca's curriculums have adopted.

The Illustrator workshop had us take a traditional data set that you might find in a research paper or project and weave it into a bright and vibrant piece of media that not only conveyed the primary data accurately, but also drew the viewer in and allowed for a fun and easily-digestible display of supplemental data and information. You can find a larger version of the sample below that I created during the workshop here, on my Adobe Portfolio page.
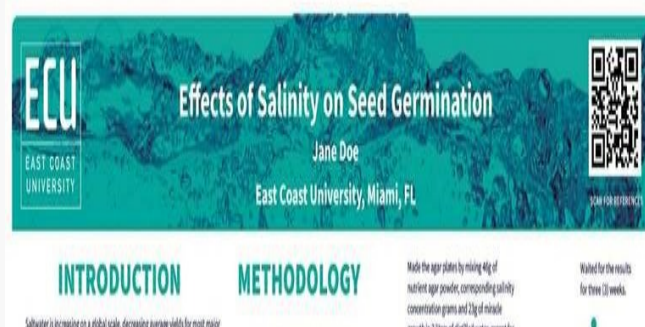
What surprised me the most about this workshop, the software, and the finished product was just how easy it all was. I had worked with Adobe Illustrator in the past but was never able to do much more than simple graphic design and file type conversions with it. Yet, with just over an hour of hands-on practice under the leadership of an Adobe instructor, I quickly picked up on some of the intermediate and advanced tools available in Illustrator. It's given me a few ideas for more engaging and interesting assignments and projects for our students that stray away from the more traditional text-based approaches.

Similarly, the Adobe Premiere workshop provoked several ideas. Adobe offers two types of their video-editing software: Adobe Premiere Pro and Adobe Premiere Rush. Premiere Pro is the traditional piece of software that allows its users a fully-fleshed-out video editing suite to create highly professional and highly polished videos. Rush is somewhat newer. This software is available on both dedicated computers but also for smartphones so users can create high-quality videos on the go. We focused on Premiere Pro in the workshop but there were many aspects that could have also been replicated in Rush.

One major advantage that Rush has is its ease of access. You don't have to be a seasoned editor to jump in and start creating appealing media. And in one of our many discussions during the conference, I was struck with the idea that students could use Rush to bridge the virtual gap that fully-online courses have created with regards to meeting their fellow classmates. After collaborating with other participants, I came up with a simple video

assignment: students in a course can use Rush to create a short introduction video for their classmates to see which can then be posted to their Blackboard course modules. This would allow classmates to get to know each other a little better, despite the physical distances that are commonplace in the digital classroom. I received a lot of helpful feedback and constructive criticism during Adobe's event and I will be implementing this into a course for the fall 2020 semester. I've created a sample of this alongside two other video projects that I worked on in Adobe Premiere which can be found here.

I am extremely thankful for the opportunity to participate in the inaugural Adobe Creative Campus Online Faculty Development Institute. I was able to meet many interesting and knowledgeable people with whom I had highly enlightening discussions. The event was very well put together with constant Adobe support that ensured a seamless transition from workshop to workshop and an ever-present ear from Adobe looking for feedback. I would highly recommend this event to anyone who has the opportunity to attend in the future. Furthermore, I encourage all of Seneca's faculty and students to take a look at the Adobe Creative Cloud suite of software and see what you can create with it. There are lots of free tutorials from Adobe on how to get the most out of their software and all Seneca faculty and students have access to the suite using their Seneca credentials.

Thanks again to Seneca and Adobe for a fun and informative week!

View the September 2020 issue of the Academic Newsletter.

September 2020 issue

tags : educational-technology, educational-technology-tools, faculty-reflections