**INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN:**

## OVERVIEW

Instructional Designers specialize in educational curriculum design and implementation. They are pedagogical specialists informed by theories (cognitive and social) of learning, teaching, and assessment. Traditionally, instructional designers hold hybrid academic positions located in college or university teaching, writing, or language centers. In academic practice, an instructional designer can expect to work with graduate student instructors as well as faculty members, and a candidate will be expected to have substantive experience teaching undergraduates.

It may be useful to be aware that, in this era of increasingly technologized instruction, instructional design work might alternatively be referred to as "Instructional Technology and Design" or just "Educational Technology." Owing to the proliferation of online and/or virtual pedagogical practices, the field is rapidly growing. Careers with technological emphasis overlap with the field referred to as "eLearning" and may be (although not always) affiliated with platforms like EdX, Coursera, and other Massively Open Online Courses (commonly referred to as MOOCs).

As you pursue your search, bear in mind the broad range of potential instructional design careers. Potential positions might be public or private, academic, nonprofit, or corporate. There are an ever-increasingly number of material products associated with learning technologies, thus instructional design work can bridge into marketing and sales. Industry players exhibit products at conferences (like the Association for Talent Development's 2016 event "TechKnowledge" (http://www.atd-techknowledge.com/). Instructional Design is also utilized in the corporate world in contexts of, for example, motivational training and the training of employees.

## CAREER LOCATIONS/CONTEXTS

- College or University Teaching Centers
- Language Centers and ESL Support Infrastructures
- Online Learning (especially for professional schools)
- Corporate Instruction (especially employee training curricula)
- College or University Writing Centers
- High Schools (Public Private, Charter – especially in context of higher ed. prep)

## KEY TERMS

- Blended Learning
- Hybrid Learning
- Experiential Learning
- Distance Learning
- Learning Management Systems (LMS)
- Flipped Classroom
- Faculty Development

- Student-Centered Curriculum
- Learning Objectives

## HOW GRADUATE SKILLS MATTER

Your passion for teaching is your most important asset.  With training and experience in course design, syllabus development, and classroom teaching, advanced degree holders are on solid footing toward a career in Instructional Design. Graduate students and postdocs are in a position to contribute up-to-the-minute knowledge of the most recent debates, methodologies and innovations relevant to their field.

It is advantageous to have a broad set of teaching experiences and a well-developed range of pedagogical practices. Use of technology in the classroom, and an understanding of **student-centered learning** are perhaps the two central components contributing to the boom in instructional design. Some *basic* interactive web development experience will go a long way toward making you exceptionally competitive for instructional design jobs, as will the integration of technology into classroom practices of teaching and learning.

Scholars holding Instructional Design PhDs or master's degrees—along with those holding degrees in Education, Composition and Rhetoric, or other credentials privileging pedagogy as a field of study—often compete effectively for this position. The challenge for applicants who do not hold these careers is to articulate exactly how you have built your own pedagogical practice within disciplines that are outside the strict borders of such programs.

## BEST PRACTICES TOWARD A SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION

Depending on where a position is housed, you may need to discern whether to submit a CV or a Resume. Either way, you'll want to privilege your pedagogy you're your resesarch. Your specific research experience, if it is not geared toward pedagogy, may not be relevant to the position to which you are applying. Emphasize your strengths as a generalist in your field and. The articulation of your focused engagement with student learning, as a graduate student instructor (or as an instructor in other contexts), is crucial. You would be well advised to think far in advance of applying about preparing a substantial and diversified [teaching portfolio](http://teaching.uchicago.edu/workshops-seminars/preparing-future-faculty-series/workshop-on-teaching-portfolios/). ([http://teaching.uchicago.edu/workshops-seminars/preparing-future-faculty-series/workshop-on-teaching-portfolios/](http://teaching.uchicago.edu/workshops-seminars/preparing-future-faculty-series/workshop-on-teaching-portfolios/))

## RESOURCES

- Center for instructional Design and Training ([http://idtcenter.org/resources/](http://idtcenter.org/resources/))
  - (don't miss their very educational index of ID Keywords) ([http://idtcenter.org/idtopedia/](http://idtcenter.org/idtopedia/))
- HASTAC ([http://www.hastac.org/](http://www.hastac.org/)) includes opportunities to

- o Publish (http://www.hastac.org/opportunities/cfp-special-issue-emerging-technologies-teaching-and-learning-iafor-journal-education-0)
  - o Present at conferences (http://www.instructionaldesigncentral.com/htm/IDC_instructionaldesignconferences.htm)
  - o And check out their Pedagogical Innovations Wiki: http://www.hastac.org/wiki/innovations
- Versatile PhD (accessible through http://grad.uchicago.edu/training_support

## WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Thoroughly document your teaching practices: Save your assignment prompts along with excellent student papers, save examples of marked papers, grading rubrics, evaluations, etc.
- Take advantage of the opportunities presented by the Chicago Center for Teaching. (http://teaching.uchicago.edu/)
  - Teaching Consultations
  - Certificate in Teaching
  - Teaching Portfolio

- Experiment with some quasi-online teaching (for example, you might experiment with recording short videos with your evaluative essay comments on undergraduate essays. The practice may actually save time, and many students appreciate the personal touch).
- Perhaps the best way to learn about online courses is to take one. Many possibilities are discussed in this recent Inside Higher Ed article: https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/higher-ed-beta/discuss-or-not-discuss
- Put together an innovative pedagogy panel to present at the annual meeting of your professional conference (like, for example, this one, recently presented at the American Historical Association: https://aha.confex.com/aha/2015/webprogram/Session12511.html)
- Gain some familiarity with Instructional Design theories and their vocabularies.
  - o http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/learning/development.html
- Read recent, tech-informed ID literature, such as:
  - o Trends and Issues in Instructional Design and Technology, Reiser and Dempsey (eds.) 2012: https://catalog.lib.uchicago.edu/vufind/Record/8389660
- Depending on how you feel about MOOCs, you might be interested in checking out some online alternative modes, such as FemTechNet's concept of the
  - o DOCC (Distributive Online Collaborative Course): http://adanewmedia.org/2012/11/issue1-juhasz/
  - o Hybrid Pedgagogy's #moocmooc resources
    - http://www.hybridpedagogy.com/
    - #moocmooc: https://twitter.com/search?q=%23moocmooc&src=typd

## CONFERENCES

- Conference on Higher Education Pedagogy
    - http://www.cider.vt.edu/conference/
- Curriculum and Pedagogy Group
    - http://www.curriculumandpedagogy.org/
- Techknowledge
    - http://www.tkconference.org/

## JOB POSTINGS

- HERC (*Higher Education Recruitment Consortium)*
    - http://main.hercjobs.org/jobs
- HigherEdJobs
    - http://www.higheredjobs.com/admin/search.cfm?JobCat=218
- Inside Higher Ed
    - https://careers.insidehighered.com/search
- Instructional Design Central
    - http://www.instructionaldesigncentral.com/htm/IDC_instructionaldesign jobs.htm
- Educause
    - http://jobs.educause.edu/jobs
- ChronicleVitae (Chronicle of Higher Ed)
    - https://chroniclevitae.com/job_search/new