Title: Critical Issues in Distance Education
Type: Panel
Panel Members: Thomas Frizelle- graduate student, Jesse Drew – graduate school, Sara Rinkleff – graduate student

The purpose of this panel is to discuss relevant critical issues in Distance Education. Critical issues reach far beyond personal experiences and educational systems. For this reason, the panel will be composed of visiting scholars and Iowa State University graduate students. We hope to provide a diverse and international perspective on critical issues related to distance education.

What are some of the advantages and disadvantages associated with the increased offering of Distance Education classes? During our time we plan to focus on several salient issues related distance education: student learning outcomes, motivational issues, pedagogical considerations and instructors intellectual rights. Our panel will present qualitative and quantitative research and offer questions for reflection.

We hope to increase understanding and awareness with other IT professionals concerning the above critical issues in distance education. As instructional technologists, we are faced with a daunting task, which has an awesome responsibility associated with it: how to create educationally meaningful learning experiences for students using technology responsibly. As with any new technology, it is long after a technology has been introduced that it either reaches its full potential or falls to the wayside. We firmly believe that distance education, and other technologies, have not been fully explored and refined. It is difficult to speculate when and how this epiphany will come about. One thing is certain, instructional technologists must be cognizant of both the changes in practice and more importantly the changes in values which distance education and other technologies bring to a culture.