

STEVEN A. BENKO

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Instructional Designer | Learning and Development Specialist | Program Manager

Curriculum development specialist & veteran educator with 20+ years of experience teaching, designing, implementing, and managing engaging learning products, solutions, and interventions that upskill professionals at all levels of experience.

Expert in training & professional development by applying knowledge of a variety of instructional techniques in design of in-person, hybrid, asynchronous, synchronous online adult education eLearning programs. Experienced in implementing best practices of multiple instructional design models (ADDIE, adult learning principles) and integrating active learning strategies into instructional modules to achieve knowledge acquisition with a focus on skill development and alignment with business goals.

Experienced Program Manager skilled in overseeing the end-to-end execution of multiple, simultaneous projects. Team-oriented with proven ability to work well under pressure. Background in mediation supports cross-functional team building and collaboration. Creative and reliable problem solver who is deadline driven. A strategic and critical thinker who can manage resources, schedules, and budgets. Commitment to continuous process improvement via incorporation of assessment data and participant feedback ensure high-quality product delivery

KEY STRENGTHS

Learning & Development Expertise

- Developing Virtual, In-Person, & Hybrid Learning Experiences
- Experienced in multiple ID methodologies (ADDIE, SAM, Adult Learning Principles) to develop effective learning solutions
- Educational Assessment, Needs Assessment, & Gap Analysis for Revisions and New Product & Course Development
- Content Design, Infographics, Storyboarding, Copywriting, Script Writing, Video Production, & Video Editing
- Learning Management System experience: LMS technical training and support, analysis of learning effectiveness, and continuous improvement based on feedback and assessment results.

Program Management

- Project Management Experience includes Full Cycle of Program Development, including End-to-End Project Planning & Execution, Pilots, Strategic Planning, Joint Ventures, & Cross-Functional Projects
- Achieved Organizational Development goals via Cross-Functional Collaboration with Subject-Matter Experts, Writers, Creatives, & Stakeholders
- Project Management Skills: Prioritization, Positive Attitude, Time Management, Flexibility, Self-Motivated, Detail Oriented.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

MEREDITH COLLEGE, Raleigh, NC

Professor, 08/2007 to 12/2023

Developed and delivered curricula for a large course load of 31 classes (virtual, hybrid, and in-person) to adult learners. Earned multiple positions: assistant professor (2007 to 2017), associate professor (2017 to 2019), and professor (2019 to 2023).

- Managed design and development of hundreds of instructional materials, online documentation, job aids, and training modules for learners and educators using LMS and industry standard design/presentation software (PowerPoint, Storyline, Camtasia).
- Collaborated with SMEs, program managers, and functional leaders to determine learning needs, define learning objectives, and align instructional content with program goals and strategic plan.
- Developed program-specific performance metrics, learning objectives, and assessment tools, tailoring reports to learning unit and department outcomes.

Program Director, Curriculum Manager, and Instructional Designer, Think Strong Program, 08/2013 to 07/2017

Managed curriculum design and development for the first-ever organization-wide quality enhancement project for reaccreditation. After identifying a need for critical thinking education, achieved buy-in and participation from all academic and non-academic units to establish the new program.

- Built and led a team of 12 SMEs to design and launch Think Strong, a campus-wide effort to develop training and enhance educational outcomes.
- Leveraged expertise in program design to launch nine new courses and then led an infusion effort to incorporate critical thinking learning activities in existing courses and co-curricular programs:
 - 80% of focus group participants agreed that the seminar benefited them in future courses, 92% reported enhanced critical thinking skills post-seminar, and 20% reported that they felt that they had mastered critical thinking skills.
- Organized inaugural Pedagogical Innovation and Enhancement Conference (PIE), a multi-day annual event with guest speakers, faculty presentations, and workshops that connected critical thinking to multiple fields of study:
 - Each year, attracted 120 attendees on average. Planned every aspect of these events, including speaker and SME recruitment, workshop facilitation, catering, venues, AV technology, and follow-up communications and events.
- Evaluated program success and adjusted strategic plan based on thorough review of participant feedback and assessment data.
 - 61% of students measured demonstrated “excellent” or “good” ability to use problem-solving skills effectively.
- Passed the reaccreditation review without request for further comment or data.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, cont.

MEREDITH COLLEGE, cont.

Program Manager and Instructional Designer, Ethics Across the Curriculum, 08/2006 to 07/2012

Inherited and evolved the grant-funded initiative to increase learner engagement. Developed and iterated course curricula, evaluated training materials and learning resources, learning outcomes, assessments, and reporting to be more effective and learner-centered.

- Directed the design and development of synchronous and asynchronous adult education training curriculum for 30+ faculty and staff.
- Designed training deliverables, including digital content, manuals, and multimedia presentations for both large and small group sessions.
- Utilized subject matter expertise and consulting skills to provide leadership development, guidance and instructional strategies for colleagues, university programs, and initiatives.
- Created an accessible library of digital resources, including how-to guides, process documents, and instructional videos for distribution on college learning management system.

NORTH CAROLINA JUDICIAL BRANCH, Dispute Resolution Commission, Raleigh, NC

Certified Mediator, 11/2024 to Present

Serve as a neutral third party who facilitates discussions between disputing parties to help them reach a mutually agreeable solution to their conflict. Encourage parties to identify issues, understand each other's perspectives, and resolve conflicts.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS, INTERVIEWS, & WORKSHOPS

[Course Design Strategies to Enhance Critical Thinking Skills](#) (Online Seminar authored on Adobe Storyline)

[Meredith Minute: The Ethics of Laughter](#) (Summary of Research Agenda)

[Is Food Delivery During the Coronavirus Pandemic Ethical?](#) (Interview)

- Interviewed for article in *The New York Times*, 2020

[Race and Gender as Fundamental and Powerful Concepts](#) (Online Webinar)

- Meredith College Planning Week, 2021

Mars Hill University (Invited Speaker, Workshop Facilitator)

- [Course Design Strategies to Enhance Critical Thinking](#) (Workshop)
- [Comedy and Ethics](#) (Presentation)
- [Teaching Case Studies](#) (Workshop)

[Meet the Philosophers Who Give 'The Good Place' Its Scholarly Bona Fides](#) (Interview)

- Interviewed for article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2018

[Facilitate Deep Learning and Student Engagement through Socratic Questioning](#) (Online Seminar)

- Magna Publications, 2017 (with Julie Schrock)

[Developing and Implementing Collaborative Learning Activities](#) (Presentation)

- Lilly Conference on Designing Effective Teaching, 2017 (with Julie Schrock and Cece Toole)
- International Society for Exploring Teaching and Learning (ISETL), 2017
- 14th Annual Elon Teaching and Learning Conference, 2017

[Redefining Participation: How Well Did You Do? How Much Did I Help?](#) (Workshop)

- International Society for Exploring Teaching and Learning (ISETL), 2016 (with Julie Schrock)
- North Carolina State University Teaching and Learning Center, 2016
- 13th Annual Elon Teaching and Learning Conference, 2016
- Lilly Conference on Designing Effective Teaching, 2016

[Show Your Students the Forest ... Not Just the Trees](#) (Presentation)

- 12th and 11th Annual Teaching Professor's Conference, 2015 and 2014 (with Julie Schrock)
- International Society for Exploring Teaching and Learning (ISETL), 2013

TECHNICAL SKILLS

LMS: Blackboard, Moodle, Canvas, D2L Brightspace

Video Production: Industry Standard Design and Video Editing Software including Adobe Creative Cloud Suite, Camtasia, DaVinci Resolve

AI/ML: Descript, ChatGPT

Project Management: Trello, Asana

Google Suite: Forms, Sheets, Docs, Gmail, Slides

MS Office: Teams, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Project

Compliance: WCAG, Section 508, UDL

Collaboration: Zoom, Slack

EDUCATION

Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Learning Design and Technology, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, Expected 2025

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) and Master of Arts (M.A.), Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Loyola University, New Orleans, LA