Professors to teach students in Indiana from Dallas supercomputing conference

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BLOOMINGTON, Ind. -- Professors Katy Borner and Howard Rosenbaum, both of Indiana University's School of Library and Information Science, will teach their regular classes from more than 900 miles away at the Supercomputing 2000 conference in Dallas.

Borner will teach her L578 User Interface Design class on the conference floor Thursday (Nov. 9) from 12 to 12:45 p.m. EST. Using the latest in virtual desktop technology, she will meet with students in a three-dimensional world called iUni. The students and Borner will be represented in the virtual world by 3-D figures called avatars. The avatars interact similarly to students and faculty in traditional classrooms.

Borner said the course provides overviews about state-of-the-art interface design, task and user analysis, interface design and goals methods, empirical evolution and other topics. During the lecture at Supercomputing 2000, students will present initial designs for virtual learning environments that will be critiqued by Borner and others. For their final project, the students will design customized environments for use by interested IU Bloomington faculty who are interlinked with Web-based materials.

"We will jointly walk through, inspect and discuss the design progress of the different learning environments, and a chat facility will be used for synchronous discussion and feedback," Borner said. "Aside from the virtual aspect, the class will not be that different from a normal lecture."

Rosenbaum will use videoconferencing to teach his L561 Electronic Commerce class on Tuesday (Nov. 7) from 5:30 to 6:15 p.m. EST.

In L561, Rosenbaum's students are required to design and operate Internet businesses. Rosenbaum said the course primarily focuses on demonstrating the workings of the virtual economy, highlighting storefronts that are currently operational, and discussing the development of business models involved in creating such businesses.

His remote lecture at the conference will cover the history and development of e-commerce, including contributions made by companies such as Cisco Systems, Netscape, Amazon, Priceline and eBay.

Broadcasts of both classes will take place at the conference's Research@Indiana booth, a collaborative effort supported by IU, Purdue University and the University of Notre Dame.

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